

UNCLASSIFIED

DE 557
A62T4
1968
A32
(pt.1)

U.S. ARMY. VIETNAM. II FIELD FORCE.

TET OFFENSIVE II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
AFTER ACTION REPORT, 31 JANUARY-18 FEB-
RUARY 1968.

DOWNGRADED TO: UNCLASSIFIED

AUTH: DoD 5200.1-R, Dec. '78

DATE 6-12-79 *bmb*

THIS PUBLICATION CONTAINS INFORMATION OF A
SENSITIVE NATURE AND IS NOT TO BE RELEASED
EXTRACTED EXCEPT FOR AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL



DEFENSE TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER

Information for the Defense Community

DTIC® has determined on 12/16/2010 that this Technical Document has the Distribution Statement checked below. The current distribution for this document can be found in the DTIC® Technical Report Database.

- ☒ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A.** Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.
- ☐ **© COPYRIGHTED;** U.S. Government or Federal Rights License. All other rights and uses except those permitted by copyright law are reserved by the copyright owner.
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT B.** Distribution authorized to U.S. Government agencies only (fill in reason) (date of determination). Other requests for this document shall be referred to (insert controlling DoD office)
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT C.** Distribution authorized to U.S. Government Agencies and their contractors (fill in reason) (date of determination). Other requests for this document shall be referred to (insert controlling DoD office)
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT D.** Distribution authorized to the Department of Defense and U.S. DoD contractors only (fill in reason) (date of determination). Other requests shall be referred to (insert controlling DoD office).
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT E.** Distribution authorized to DoD Components only (fill in reason) (date of determination). Other requests shall be referred to (insert controlling DoD office).
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT F.** Further dissemination only as directed by (inserting controlling DoD office) (date of determination) or higher DoD authority.
- Distribution Statement F is also used when a document does not contain a distribution statement and no distribution statement can be determined.*
- ☐ **DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT X.** Distribution authorized to U.S. Government Agencies and private individuals or enterprises eligible to obtain export-controlled technical data in accordance with DoDD 5230.25; (date of determination). DoD Controlling Office is (insert controlling DoD office).



DOWNGRADED TO: UNCLASSIFIED
AUTH: DoD 5200.1-R, Dec 78
DATE: 6-12-79 bmb

TET OFFENSIVE

II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

AFTER ACTION REPORT

31 January - 18 February 1968

RECORD NO. 105007

CONFIDENTIAL

Unclassified When Separated
from Classified Inclosures.

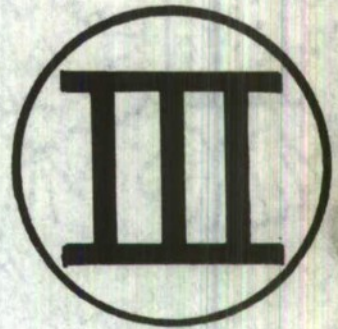
UNCLASSIFIED

Comd Historian 96375
USARV -
R7M - 11515

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

U. S. ARMY, VIETNAM, II FIELD FORCE.



DOWNGRADED TO: UNCLASSIFIED
AUTH: DoD 5200.1-R, Dec 78
DATE: 6-12-79 *hmb*

TET OFFENSIVE
II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
AFTER ACTION REPORT
31 January - 18 February 1968

RECORD NO. 109007

109007

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

Unclassified When Separated
from Classified Inclosures.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)
(K-1)

Commanding General
United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: MACJ 3-43
APO 96222

1. NAME OF OPERATION: TET Offensive After Action Report.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 310001 January to 182400 February 1968.
3. LOCATION: III Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of South Vietnam.
4. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: III Corps and II Field Force, Vietnam.
5. REPORTING OFFICER: LTG Frederick C. Weyand, CG II Field Force Vietnam.
6. TASK ORGANIZATION: Annex B (US/FWMAF Troop List) and Annex C (ARVN Troop List).
7. SUPPORTING FORCES: Annex F (Role of Armor) and Annex G (Artillery).
8. INTELLIGENCE: (Annex A).
9. MISSION: III ARVN Corps and II Field Force Vietnam units conduct offensive operations during 31 Jan-18 Feb 1968 to defeat VC/NVA forces who initiated the TET OFFENSIVE in III Corps Tactical Zone.
10. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS: This is a report on the 1968 Viet Cong - North Vietnamese Army TET Offensive in III Corps Tactical Zone, and the actions of II Field Force Vietnam and III Corps, RVNAF in defeating that offensive. It includes those general events leading up to TET, the detailed course of the fighting from 31 January through 18 February and a summary of the results of the battle.
11. EXECUTION:
 - a. Events leading up to TET.

By November 1967 the operations of II FFFORCEV and III Corps within III CTZ had succeeded in driving the bulk of the VC/NVA main forces away from the more heavily populated areas into the sparsely settled border regions. A captured document showed that the VC in MRIV - the region

109007

RECORD NO. _____

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVAL
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

around Saigon - had suffered three times the losses in 1967 as in 1966. The threat in Gia Dinh Province surrounding Saigon was reduced to the point that the 199th Lt Inf Bde was able to phase out Op FAIRFAX, and to move into War Zone D, leaving to the 5th ARVN Ranger Group primary tactical responsibility for the security of the Capital Military District.

The VC were in serious straits in Phouc Tuy and Long Khanh Province where allied pressure had broken down their supply system. The VC in western Hau Nghia Province had been reduced to the point that the 25th US Div was able to shift its brigade forces to operations northwest of Cu Chi; while the 25th ARVN Div continued pacifying Hau Nghia.

The 1st Inf Div had been successful in opening and holding open Highway 13 to Quan Loi, splitting War Zone C from D, as well as facilitating civil and military movement north of Saigon.

The 9th Inf Div had commenced clearing Highway 1 from Saigon to the II-III Corps boundary turning it over progressively to the 18th ARVN Div. The 9th Div was also able to draw down on forces in the northeastern portion of its TAOI while concentrating on expanding Mobile Riverine Force operations in IV CTZ in the Delta.

The Revolutionary Development program was accelerating. Public administration training was underway in all Provinces. Economic activity was improving, partly as a result of the opening of many road LOCs particularly in Hau Nghia and Binh Duong Province.

While VC terrorism was on the rise, there was ample evidence that this was occurring because the VC political infrastructure was losing its influence over key sectors of the population.

In November there occurred a series of enemy initiated battles in Phouc Long and Binh Long Provinces. VC/NVA launched strong attacks against Song Be, Loc Ninh, Bu Dop and Bo Duc. During the course of these battles it was found that 21 of the 54 main and local force VC/NVA battalions in III CTZ were concentrated in the northern border regions.

It appeared that the enemy in III CTZ had decided to employ the majority of his main force units along the Cambodian border and, in particular, to strengthen and consolidate his hold over Military Region 10 (Binh Long, Phuoc Dong and Quang Duc Provinces). While intelligence information indicated that the enemy was preparing for a major dry season effort, it appeared that he was probably going to launch the attacks after a TET truce period during which he would massively resupply and reinforce across South Vietnamese borders.

Both to destroy his main force units where they could be found, and to frustrate any large scale TET truce infiltration from Cambodia, II FFV adopted in early December a border strategy and deployment posture depicted on Map 1.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

This map shows III CTZ, the 11 Provinces, the actual VC/NVA order of battle on 10 Dec and the planned TET posture for the 53 II FFORCEV Maneuver Bns. The black circle depicts the allied base area, including Saigon and the Capital Military District, the Long Binh/Bien Hoa complex, and the base camp areas for all 4 US Divisions in III CTZ. 75% of the population of III CTZ lives in this area.

The planned II FFORCEV deployment posture stemmed from a COMUSMACV directed strategy that had three basic features.

First, the undertaking of several offensive operations in the border areas: a divisional sized operation SAN ANGELO-in Phouc Long Province, a 2 Bde operation-YELLOWSTONE-in War Zone C and an Armored Cavalry Regiment operation-FARGO- in Binh Long Province. These three operations would have committed 22 of the 53 maneuver Bns available to CG, II FFV along the northern border.

Secondly, it was planned to achieve a border sealing TET posture in which Battalion Task Forces would block main VC infiltration routes during the TET truce.

Thirdly, by mutual US/RVNAF agreement, there would be a continuing of the shift of responsibility for the security of the area around Saigon and the allied base from US to Vietnamese forces.

It can be seen that, had II FFORCEV fully pursued this strategy the bulk of its forces, 39 Bns, would have been deployed outside the allied base area and up to 150 kilometers from Saigon. At that distance redeployment would have to have been largely by fixed wing aircraft (C-123s and 130s) which must land on secure airfields. Only 14 maneuver battalions would have been available in this base area for quick redeployment and reaction to threats.

The general deployment of the maneuver battalions of ARVN III Corps during this period was not expected to change as radically. On the 10th of Dec there were 22 battalions inside the base area and 25 outside. The 18th ARVN Division was disposed generally eastward along Highway 1, which had been opened for traffic from Saigon to the III Corps boundary since late December. It would continue to provide route security. The 5th ARVN Division was concentrated in Binh Duong Province north of Saigon. The 25th ARVN Division had 15 battalions deployed in western Hau Nghia Province and in Long An Province in position to intercept VC movement from the Parrots Beak area 40 km west of Bao Trai.

Inside the CMD the 5th Ranger Group with 3 battalions provided the area security, backing up the other type RVNAF battalions (3 RF, 2 SVC, 2 MP) which secured Saigon proper.

16 ARVN battalions would remain committed to the security of RD areas.

II FFORCEV did not execute the 10 Dec strategy once evidence began to amass that the VC had changed their own strategy and were going to aim their main force offensive at the populated areas of III CTZ which was largely covered by ARVN.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Map 2 depicts significant VC/NVA unit moves which were detected during December and January. These moves indicated a definite shift of forces toward the base area in III CTZ.

There were other indicators also.

a. There were several significant battalion sized attacks against district and province capitals such as Bao Trai and Trang Bang in Hau Nghia Province and Tan Uyen in Bien Hoa Province. These attacks broke the pattern of earlier enemy operations and signalled a change in the type objective of VC forces and the size forces he would use in the attacks. Plans for attacks on other capitals were discovered. These included planned attacks on Dau Tieng, Phu Loi, Lai Khe, My Tho, Ben Cat, Cu Chi and Tay Ninh.

b. The VC reorganized the old MR4 area around Saigon (shown by a dotted red line) into five new sub-regions directly under COSVN control (shown by solid red lines). These regions, radiating out from Gia Dinh were obviously designed to facilitate operations around Saigon.

c. VC forces throughout III CTZ were being reequipped with AK47s, 50s, RPG-2s and 7s.

d. NVA fillers were being infused into local force battalions.

e. There were persistent reports of a major offensive being planned.

While these indicators lent weight to the assessment that the VC were going to launch a major offensive, and the objective would be in the populated areas, as yet in early January it was not concluded that the attacks would occur during, and in violation of the TET truce, or that the main objective would be Saigon itself.

Nevertheless, CG II FFORCEV throughout January gradually shifted the center of gravity of his forces to meet the changed threat.

On 10 January COMUSMACV approved abandoning the original TET posture.

Map 3 shows the actual 29 January posture of II FFORCEV units, which amounted to a strategic reversal of the originally planned TET posture. Only 22 battalions remained outside the base area while 27 were inside, within assault helicopter reinforcing distance of any point. Four battalions had been deployed to I CTZ at MACV's direction.

Only one brigade of the 101st Abn Div was deployed into the SAN ANGELO operation rather than the entire division. One brigade was diverted into AO MANCHESTER in War Zone D releasing the 199th Lt Inf Bde for security operations in AO UNIONTOWN around the Bien Hoa/Long Binh complex. One brigade of the 101st Abn Div undertook operations in AO NORMANDY in the FILHOL area north of Cu Chi just before its redeployment to I CTZ.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

One brigade of the 25th Inf Div was pulled out of AO YELLOWSTONE in War Zone C and operated closer to Dau Tieng, while one brigade shifted from north of Highway 1 to western Hau Nghia Province.

Op FARGO was terminated and only 1 Sqdn remained at Loc Ninh while the Regt (-), together with elements of the 101st Abn Div and 1st Div conducted a series of three leap-frogging operations north to south called ATTALA, ARAB, and ASPEN targeted against the suspected locations of the 165, 88 and 101 NVA Regts.

The 1st Australian Task Force (1 ATF) commenced its first operation outside Phouc Tuy Province when two of its three battalions conducted operation COBURG in AO COLUMBUS against the suspected locations of the 274, 275 VC Regts and the 5th VC Division.

During this same period of time there were no major shifts in ARVN forces. However III Corps shifted three battalions just before TET. The 3/9 Inf Bn was moved from Song Be to Phu Van, vicinity of 5th ARVN Div headquarters; the 1/52 Inf Bn was moved from its deployment on Highway 1 to Gia Ray; and the 52d Ranger Bn was moved to the vicinity of Xuan Loc from Ham Tan.

Men absent from their units for the TET truce had lowered ARVN strength on 29 January to about 50% of their authorized 41,952 strength. Although the TET truce was cancelled at 0945 on 30 January, the inadequate Vietnamese communication system precluded the effective notification of the bulk of these soldiers. Accordingly the strength of the 46 ARVN battalions was still at about 50% when the VC attacks were launched on 31 January.

Thr RF/PF in III CTZ were at approximately 70% present for duty strength on the 30th of January, largely because the individuals in the units live close to their outposts.

b. VC Strategy and Plan.

According to various sources and VC documents captured in the weeks before their offensive, the main VC/NVA strategy was based on the fact that "the war will reach a culminating point" in 1967-68 with the objective of:

- (1) Forcing US forces to withdraw from Vietnam.
- (2) Forcing the GVN to accept a coalition government which the NLFSVN could dominate.

The objectives of forcing US withdrawal and gain coalition were to be reached by a general counter-offensive featuring large scale, powerful continuous attacks utilizing reserve forces supported by newer and larger weapons. This counter-offensive was to coincide with a general uprising of the people of SVN who would assist the VC in destroying the GVN. The attacks were to be directed at political and military targets, such as:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- (1) Provincial and district capitals.
- (2) The government in Saigon.
- (3) Other GVN agencies such as RD cadres and the National Police.
- (4) Widespread attacks by fire designed to demonstrate the failure of GVN to protect people and to offer an opportunity to propagandize and proselyte the people.
- (5) Finally, the destruction and/or demoralization of the RVNAF.

Tactical targets of military significance were to be airfields, rear service bases such as Long Binh Post, lines of communication to include docks and shipping facilities, and cities; targets whose existence are essential to the conduct of the war as well as the government and targets which, by their nature, are difficult to secure and defend.

The operational plan for the VC in III CTZ appears to have included efforts to:

- (1) Move to areas along the Cambodian border where training and resupply could be accomplished in established base camps closer to sources of supply and the safe border of Cambodia.
- (2) Attempt to draw US forces from central and southern III CTZ toward the Cambodian border where they would be fixed for TET.
- (3) Concurrently, to infiltrate replacements and new equipment to the main and local force units which would conduct the main attacks.
- (4) Launch simultaneous attacks against the selected objectives with main and local force units which would conduct the main attacks.
- (5) Launch simultaneous attacks against the selected objectives with main and local force Bns while the Regts blocked Allied reaction with the exception of the 5 VC Div, which had the mission of attacking the Bien Hoa/Long Binh Complex.

The VC were counting heavily on the fact that ARVN units would be at reduced strength during TET.

The VC operational plan was apparently as indicated on map 4.

(1) 274th and 275th VC Regts supported by combined Artillery Group, U-1 Local Force Bn, and other local force elements had the mission to seize and hold the Bien Hoa/Long Binh complex. Key targets were Bien Hoa AB; HQ, II FFV; HQ, III Corps; the PW camp, and destruction of the ammo storage area.

(a) 271st Regt: Attack selected targets in the Hoc Mon area; block allied reaction by interdicting Route 1; be ready to reinforce and exploit success in the northern Saigon area.

(b) 272d Regt: Block reaction of the US 25th Inf Div from the Cu Chi-Dau Tieng area; be ready to reinforce to the northwest of Saigon.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(c) 273d Regt: District and RVN installations in Thu Duc HQ, block reinforcements from Bien Hoa; blow the Newport bridge at Binh Loi.

(d) 165th NVA Regt: Contain 1st Inf Div in vic Lai Khe; interdict Highway 13.

(e) 141st NVA Regt: Interdiction of Hwy 13 vic An Loc.

(f) 101st NVA Regt: Secure the area north of Saigon in vicinity of Go Vap.

(2) Dong Nai Regt: Given Bn missions, 1 Bn to seize and hold Tan Uyen, other elements participated in attack on Phu Loi - Phu Cuong, supported by Phu Loi 1 Bn. 3d Bn, attack Tan An.

(3) 88th NVA Regt: Block Hwy 13 vic An Loc.

(4) In the Saigon - Cholon - Tan Son Nhut area the attacks were conducted by the 1st, 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th Local Force Bns, the 2d Independent Bn, 267, 269, and 506 Local Force Battalions and the C-10 Sapper Bn. Their missions were: To seize and hold TSN AB and possibly the adjacent Vice-Presidential Palace, to seize and hold the Presidential Palace, to seize the US and Phillipine Embassy's, to seize and hold or destroy selected objectives such as National Police Stations, power points, and other GVN installations. The primary purpose was to disrupt the GVN and the City of Saigon as much as possible, to cause the GVN and US government to "lose face", and to force the GVN to the conference table with the NFL and/or NVN where they could negotiate from a position of strength. These units were to have been reinforced within 48 hours, according to prisoners.

(5) In Sub-Region E-1, 7th LF Bn: Seize and hold Cu Chi.

(6) Sub Region E-2, 506th LF Bn: Seize and hold Duc Hoa to include HQ 25th ARVN Div.

(7) Sub-Region E-3, local forces: Harass GVN installations by fire, assist in the passage of forces attacking Saigon, conduct harassing attacks by fire and provide security for C&C element conducting attack on Saigon.

(8) Sub-Region E-4, local force: Harass GVN installations by fire.

(9) Ba Bien Province, D445 LF Bn: Seize and hold Ba Ria.

(10) D440 LF Bn: Seize and hold Xuan Loc, 18th ARVN Div HQ

(11) My Tho Province, 261, 263 MF Bns, 514th LF Bn: Seize and hold My Tho; 516 LF Bn: Seize and hold Ben Tre.

(12) Sub-Region E-5, Phu Loi I Bn: In conjunction with the Dong Nai Regt: Seize and hold Phu Loi - Phu Cuong.

(13) All these actions were supported by local force units who probably had the mission of assisting the main attacks by providing guides and security forces, as well as conducting harassing attacks on either pre-planned targets or targets of opportunity.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LIBRARY
ARMED FORCES STAFF COLLEGE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(14) In War Zone C and MR 10, local forces supported by COSVN security units, rear service units, and artillery units were to pin down allied forces by conducting harassing attacks by fire against Allied Installations and FSPB's.

LOG
The techniques of VC/NVA infiltration of both supplies and forces bears mentioning. The buildup of weapons and ammunition caches in and around Saigon began as early as November. Caches were established for the purpose of:

- (1) Resupplying attacking local force units.
- (2) Arming recently recruited personnel.
- (3) Arming civilians who would rally to the VC cause during the expected "uprising".
- (4) Arm VC prisoners released from Chi Hoa Prison.

Heavier weapons and ammunitions were generally infiltrated from Cambodia via the "Parrots Beak" (Ba Thu) area by sampan. Replacements and rockets came through the "saddle" area of Phouc Long Province, down routes east of Song Be, and through War Zone D. Another major route for supplies was the "Fishhook" area on the Tay Ninh - Binh Long Province boundary in War Zone C.

* It is known that the VC made a study of commercial traffic into Saigon and based upon this knowledge weapons, ammunition and demolitions were smuggled into the city by vehicles representative of the prevailing traffic. For example along Highway 1, vegetable and produce carrying trucks were used and trucks normally carrying rubber and firewood used on Highway 13. Hollowed logs, coconuts and pineapples were techniques employed, to transport small arms and ammunition.

The movement of enemy troops into Saigon was non-infiltration in the accepted sense of the word, such as movement from NVN to SVN down the Ho Chi Minh trail. The Bns that participated in the attack on Saigon proper (exclusive of Tan Son Nhut Air Base) were the 1st through 6th Bns, inclusive of old MRIV, all of which normally had operated in or on the periphery of the CMD. The VC in these Bns were familiar with Saigon and did not require any extensive network to assist their movement into the city. They were able to move about as ordinary citizens. For example the C 10 Sapper Bn is a Saigon unit and several PWs from this unit revealed that they were taxi or lambretta drivers and were intimately familiar with the city. The weapons for these units other than those carried where infiltrated under various covers and disguises. There are no documented cases of any mass movements, such as bringing weapons in by ship.

When it is considered that the VC infiltrated Saigon, a city of 2,500,00, and suburbs of an additional 800,000, with 4,000 troops, the infiltration is placed in its proper perspective. Four thousand people moving in a city that size during the TET season, while nearly 20,000 ARVN soldiers were on TET leave would be extremely difficult to detect.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

EXECUTION
Pblws
The other battalions and regiments that took part in the offensive made normal tactical marches over established routes, through established base camps, and known base areas. These units were held in assembly areas at 9 to 12 hours marching distance from their targets. At the proper time they moved out to attempt to reach their targets for the coordinated assault. Several things served to cause a faulty execution of their plan. Guides and units got separated or lost, columns got intermixed forcing the commanders to either attempt unscrambling on the move or waste valuable time by halting and unscrambling. Another example was the failure of two VC companies to rendezvous in the rubber plantation adjacent to the Bien Hoa POW camp because they became confused when they arrived and found no rubber trees. Some plows had cleared the area of vegetation one month earlier and the units overshot their mark and did not contribute to the unsuccessful attack on the camp. Some march tables were poorly calculated, so that a few units were in the wrong place at the wrong time and in the wrong formation. Other units attacked from a march column without deploying, while in still other cases units waited for following elements which never arrived.

c. Actions during 29 Jan - 5 Feb:

In the 48 hours preceeding the main VC attacks in III CTZ events moved swiftly. Intelligence indicators of an imminent attack multiplied and both ARVN and US forces made precautionary adjustments.

CG, II FFORCEV sent out a Flash message to all OPCON units at 291615 Jan stating that the VC could be expected to violate the TET truce and for all units to be prepared for that contingency.

EXC
TRUCK
On the night of 29-30 Jan heavy attacks occurred in I CTZ, causing GVN to cancel the TET truce at 300945 Jan. III Corps and II FFORCEV immediately resumed offensive operations. The only significant contact on the 30th, however, was the sighting at 1100 hours by a 25th ARVN Div FAC of a convoy of 25 ox carts and 200 VC south of Tay Ninh at XT290300. Tac Air and a light fire team killed 40 VC and destroyed 8 ox carts.

18th ARVN Div redeployed two battalions to Xuan Loc as a ready reaction force - the 52d Ranger Battalion from Ham Tan, Phouc Tuy Province, and the 1/52 Inf Bn from its Highway 1 security mission in Binh Tuy Province.

The 5th ARVN Div redeployed the 3/9 Inf Bn from Song Be to the vicinity of 5th ARVN Div headquarters in Binh Duong Province.

CG, III Corps also directed the CO, CMD to request OPCON of the 1st Abn Bn from JGS on 30 Jan which was done. The 1st Abn Bn was deployed in Saigon as CMD reserve with one company dispatched to the National Broadcasting Station and one to the Chi Hoa Prison.

AK
Tan Son Nhut Sensitive Area conducted a rehearsal of its US-ARVN base counterattack plan, and on 30 Jan went on red alert at 1745 hours along with Bien Hoa Airbase.

At 2125 hours the 86th RF battalion captured a prisoner in the CMD who

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

quickly admitted that Tan Son Nhut and the broadcasting station were to be attacked that night, that tanks would be used, and that the VC were dressed like ARVN soldiers. Based on this information, the CMD alerted all units at 2200 hours and red alert status was in effect.

At Long Binh the perimeter bunkers were manned, and gunships were placed on strip alert.

d. The Battle of Long Binh.

As early as 0035 hours on 31 Jan the first indications of a ground attack were realized as Co E, 4/12 Inf, 199th Lt Inf Bde detected and engaged a VC force north of the Dong Nai River (XT039222) moving south toward Bien Hoa Airbase. They engaged the VC, were supported by artillery and air and eventually killed 47 VC. At about 0100 a long range patrol of the 199th Bde also detected approximately 90 VC who doubletimed past their position just north of Ho Nai Village near Long Binh.

These contacts caused the gunships on strip alert to be ordered aloft. When the widespread 122mm rocket and mortar attacks came at 0300 these aircraft were able to quickly engage several of the launching sites, disrupting their fire.

Map 5 shows the full scope of the VC initiated actions in the base area of III CTZ on 31 January. Each red dot represents an attack by fire and each red arrow a separate ground attack.

Map 6 shows the allied response on the 31st in the areas of the most significant engagements which are outlined by black lines. Only the unit symbols are shown for the principal forces involved in these attacks.

In the Long Binh area, a heavy rocket and mortar barrage directed at the 199th Bde Hq and II FFORCEV Hq started the attack. Light fire teams prewarned and aloft and artillery responded immediately to the rocket fire coming from the east and north of the Dong Nai River. Several of the eastern firing points were put out of action before they had fired all the rounds on site.

At 0330 CG II FFORCEV ordered the 2/47 Mech Bn, 9th Inf Div north from its position on Route 15 vicinity Bearcat, to the Long Binh area.

At 0430 two battalions of the 275th Regiment launched a ground attack through Ho Nai village south across Highway 1 against the northern perimeter of Long Binh. At the same time U-1 Local Force Battalion harassed the eastern perimeter covering efforts by Sapper units to penetrate the main ammunition dump. One company of the 275 Regt attempted to seize the ARVN PW compound, located between Bien Hoa and Long Binh, which contained approximately 2000 PW's at the time of the attack.

While fire was returned from the bunker line and from armored personnel carriers other units of the 199th Bde immediately engaged the VC throughout the area. By a series of platoon and company moves, both on foot and mechanized, they converged on the 275 Regt which was

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

under heavy fire, particularly from gunships of one Air Cav Troop 3/17 Air Cav Sqdn. Enemy forces were unable to make headway into the bamboo area south of the PLANTATION Compound and attacked the 12th Aviation Group runway without success. Several teams penetrated the ammo dump and set time charges, many of which were removed by EOD teams before 4 of 100 pads of ammo detonated at 0800. The 1st Platoon, Company B, 2 Battalion 47 Infantry (Mechanized) with MP gun jeeps were protecting II FFORCEV Hq. This force started a sweep through Widows Village, located across the road and north of the Hq, where it ran into strong resistance and lost one APC.

By 0600 it became apparent that the 199th Bde, reinforced by units of the 9th Div and supported by the fires of one troop of the 3/17 Air Cav, had encircled the bogged down assault elements of the 275th Regt and were killing them at a sustained rate.

At 0800, Company B 4/39 Inf made a combat assault into the grass helicopter pad in a field opposite II FFV Hq. The LZ was hot, the unit quickly cleared the area and moved through the Widows Village along with a mechanized company and the recon platoon from the 2nd Battalion 47th Infantry.

A company sized force from the 199th Bde, together with ARVN MPs, repulsed the attack on the PW compound although it fought alone until late afternoon.

From this point on the battle at LONG BINH consisted of the systematic destruction of the defeated VC Regt by air, artillery, ground sweeps, ambush and LRP activities.

e. The Battle of Bien Hoa.

Simultaneous with the 0300 attack on the eastern portion of LONG BINH, BIEN HOA Airbase received about 25 rockets followed closely by a mortar supported ground attack. Two Bns of the 274th VC Regt attacked from the east, while the 238th VC Local Force Co reinforced, attacked III Corps Headquarters.

The VC attacking the airbase were initially engaged by the east bunker line manned by an RF Platoon, and the MP Base reaction force. The VC breached the perimeter wire but did not get onto the airstrip. The 57th RF Bn, dispatched by the Dong Nai Sensitive Area Command, reinforced the defenders of the Air Base at 0420 and the VC were driven out of their penetration.

At 0820 the 2/506 Abn Bn was deployed by helicopter from its operational area in AO MANCHESTER to the 101st Abn Div HQ at BIEN HOA Air Base and commenced an attack south out through the east gate.

A Troop, 3/5 Cav from the 9th Div had been ordered to reinforce III Corps Headquarters, departed from Blackhorse Base Camp, fought right through the middle of the 275 Regt astride Highway 1 and plowed into the flank of the 274th Regt attacking BIEN HOA Air Base, inflicting and suffering heavy losses. It linked up with the 2/506 Bn and assisted in securing III Corps Hq. Airstrikes, gunships and artillery saturated the VC approach routes east of the airbase. Despite the heavy ground attack

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

air operations were not halted at BIEN HOA except between 0300 and 1300 on 31 Jan.

By late afternoon, 31 Jan, the immediate ground threat to Bien Hoa and the III Corps Headquarters had been eliminated. Several hundred VC were killed in this action. It was to take three more days, and the concerted efforts of the 199th Bde, elements of the 101st Abn Div, 11th Armored Cav Regiment, and the 9th Inf Div to drive out or destroy the remnants of the five VC battalions in the Bien Hoa/Long Binh area. The major ground attack from the 5th VC Division, however, was eliminated on the first day of the offensive.

f. The Battle of Tan Son Nhut.

The attack of Tan Son Nhut commenced at 0321 hours when heavy fire was received on the base from all around the perimeter. The main attack by a 3 battalion force was launched from the west at Gate #51 while secondary attacks were aimed at eastern Gate #10 and northern Gate #58.

The VC force apparently attacked in a column of battalions, prepared to pour through a breach in the perimeter bunker line. The heavy weapons companies of each of the battalions were set up in the Vinatexco Textile Mill, a structure west of Gate #10. Anti-aircraft weapons were placed on the roof, and apparently a cache of weapons was assembled there to supply those recruits in the force that were not armed.

The initial assault defeated several bunkers guarding Gate 51 and the leading battalion penetrated the defenses and got approximately 200 meters inside the wire in the direction of the main runway.

Forces from the 377th Security Police Squadron and a 2 platoon USARV Task Force (TF35) and mixed ARVN elements executed their counter-attack plan in time to block the penetrating force.

At approximately 0430 2 companies from the 8th ARVN Abn Bn counter-attacked the penetration, sustaining heavy casualties.

The Tan Son Nhut Sensitive Area Commander and his advisor requested assistance from US combat forces. The 3d Sqdn, 4th Cavalry, 25th Inf Div was committed. The Sqdn was deployed on Route 1 from the Hoc Mon Bridge, 8 miles from TSN, to Go Dau Ha. Troop C, at the Hoc Mon Bridge responded first. It was guided cross country past potential blocking positions by the Sqdn Commander who dropped flares from his C&C helicopter. This technique permitted the troop to arrive before light, at 0600, avoiding VC planned ambushes.

Troop C attacked the VC force from the northwest drawing heavy fire from the Textile Mill. It succeeded in cutting off the trailing VC battalions from their source of weapons in the mill. It then became heavily engaged with the VC forces in the vicinity of Gate 51, losing over a third of its strength while destroying the capability of the VC force to continue the attack. This was the decisive force, and action, which defeated the main VC assault on TSN.

VNAF and USAF airstrikes were put on the Textile Mill in the morning hours and partly neutralized its fire.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

At 1219 a mixed US and ARVN force of 25 men from TSN, under the command of a US Army Sergeant (MSG Beaugardus) launched a counter-attack against the depleted VC force inside the base and overran them, closing the gate and ending this threat. During this action the Vietnamese Commander, Deputy Commander, and US Deputy Senior Advisor were wounded.

At 1300 the remainder of the 3/4 Cav Sqdn arrived at Gate 51 after having completed the neutralization of the Textile Mill, and engaging the disorganized VC forces. The threat was eliminated from the west when the 3/4 Cav arrived.

Over 500 VC dead were counted within the base and west of Gate 51.

On the north perimeter of TSN the 2d Svc Bn (ARVN) blocked the strong VC/NVA attack which had already swept through Go Vap.

Two VN Marine Bns from the Delta were combat assaulted into the JGS headquarters area during the morning and one, the 4th VNMC Bn counterattacked Go Vap from inside TSN.

In Go Vap the VC overran the Co Loa Artillery Camp capturing 12 105mm howitzers. The defenders had removed the breech blocks however, so the weapons could not be used. These artillery pieces were later recaptured intact. By 1000 hours the Armored Command Headquarters was also penetrated. The VC were accompanied by NVA tank crews, expecting to capture, and use, tanks from the headquarters, but all had been removed two months previously. The counterattack by the 4th VNMC Bn retook the Co Loa area by nightfall, having killed over 100 VC and sustaining losses of 7 KIA and 52 WIA.

g. The Race Track.

The Phu Tho Race Track was the locus of another series of battles. The VC seized and tried to hold the race track for several reasons:

- (1) It was a good rallying point for VC unfamiliar with Saigon.
- (2) It was the center of a good road net.
- (3) It had a large covered area, suitable for a hospital.
- (4) Its control denied the US forces a large LZ inside the city.
- (5) It was within 82mm mortar range of TSN.

A strong VC force converged and assembled at the track after over-running the police station there. A US MP platoon engaged them but was pinned down. One Company 3/7 Inf, reinforced with a platoon of D/17 Cav, drove in from Binh Chanh by truck and counterattacked, linking up with the MP force. This force cleared the race track so that by 1300 the 3/7 Inf Bn was able to combat assault onto the track.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The 33d Ranger Bn from Nha Be District joined the 3/7 Inf and the combined force commenced to clear the area. By nightfall an area 3 to 4 blocks in radius was cleared. The 6 VC Local Force Bn, which had the mission of seizing the nearby Chi Hoa Prison, was the principal enemy unit engaged. In the course of the heavy fighting in the vicinity, the VC Bn was virtually destroyed. It never reached its objective - the Chi Hoa Prison.

→ The fighting around the race track ebbed and flowed for several days because VC troops continued to rally there. Eventually personnel from every VC unit in the attacks on Saigon were identified at the race track.

h. US Embassy.

The US Embassy was a particular target singled out for the VC. Elements from the C10 Sapper Bn - a unit whose members lived in Saigon itself - breached the wall with satchel charges and attacked the main building with RPG and AW fire. The Marine guards defended from inside the building and were reinforced by both MPs and a small Marine reaction force. One platoon from Co C, 1/502 Abn Bn was dispatched from Bien Hoa by helicopter and successfully landed on the roof pad at 0810 after having been driven off by fire at 0500. The grounds were secured by 0900, 19 VC having been killed on the Embassy grounds.

i. Other Attacks in Saigon.

JGS headquarters was attacked from the north at 0930. The VC succeeded in entering peripheral buildings but were unable to reach any vital installations. They were opposed by the 8th Abn Bn. As soon as ARVN reinforcements arrived the VC holed up in the buildings they had seized and ARVN undertook the slow task of rooting them out.

The Presidential Palace received RPG and AW fire from an unfinished hotel across the street from the palace grounds. ARVN troops, US MPs and National Police, supported by two ARVN tanks cordoned off the area. They kept the building under a state of siege for two days until all the VC were either killed or captured.

Attacks were made against police stations, particularly in the 6th and 7th Precincts. Hotels and other embassies were attacked by fire.

The studio portion of the National Broadcasting Station was seized. The 1st ARVN Abn Bn drove the VC out.

BOQ's and BEQ's throughout Saigon received attacks by fire. Police and combat unit forces were dispatched to the relief of US personnel in these quarters.

j. Hoc Mon.

The attacks outside Saigon proper in the CMD were launched against Hoc Mon and Binh Chanh district headquarters. The attack on Binh Chanh

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

subsector headquarters was repelled. The central police station was overrun, two bridges destroyed, the District Headquarter surrounded and the Quang Trang Training Center penetrated in Hoc Mon District. Several VC companies occupied downtown Hoc Mon. 1st Bn, 27th Inf was combat assaulted west of the district capital in the afternoon of the 31st, but was not able to clear the town by dark.

k. Reinforcement of CMD.

Throughout the day of the 31st ARVN and US forces reinforced the CMD. Chart A shows the rate of reinforcement through the 5th of February.

The VC failed to prevent reinforcement either overland or by air. By midnight of the 31st US and ARVN had brought more maneuver battalions into the CMD than the VC had in their initial assault.

In order to control combat units in the CMD, CG II FFORCEV dispatched his Deputy Commander to Saigon with a small staff to take operational control of all US units. This operational headquarters, TASK FORCE WARE, was colocated at CMD headquarters and was operational by 1100 31 Jan. It remained operational until 18 Feb.

Outside the CMD besides widespread attacks by fire there were four major ground attacks. These attacks were initiated against Ben Cat, Duc Hoa, My Tho, and Ben Tre. Map 7 shows all major attacks in III CTZ through 19 Feb.

l. Ben Cat.

The Phu Loi Local Force (LF) Bn, C10 LF Co and an element of the C10 Sapper Bn attacked the 8th ARVN Regt Hqs and Ben Cat District Hq at 0355 from the east. By 0429 the VC were inside the ARVN perimeter having captured the 155mm howitzer position. The town of Ben Cat was also occupied. The 1st Squadron 4th Cavalry and Co C 1/18 Inf counterattacked with the 2/8 ARVN Inf by 0530, supported by 1st Div Arty, 5 LFTs, and Spooky. The armored cavalry relieved the district headquarters just before it was about to fall.

The attack was halted and contact broken by the VC at 0600. The enemy left 47 dead, 4 PWs and 20 weapons behind. Friendly losses were 13 ARVN KIA, 21 WIA and 3 US Advisors were WIA.

m. Duc Hoa.

Elements of the VC 506th LF Bn attacked the 25th ARVN Div Hq, and the MACV compound in Duc Hoa at 0625. At 0640 they entered the market place.

First a FAC from Tan An and a LFT from Cu Chi arrived at 0640. At 0720 the 4/49 Bn, 2/10th Cav, and the Div Recon Co - all ARVN - arrived and counterattacked. The VC withdrew to the southwest by 0900.

n. My Tho.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

At 0415 My Tho was attacked by strong VC forces while the 32d Ranger Bn north of the city was attacked at 0500. A VC Bn entered the city and fighting continued throughout the day. B Co, 3/47 Bn was dispatched east from Dong Tam and cleared the western portion of the city to the main north-south canal by dark.

The 3d Bde, 9th Div together with Navy TF 117 made a riverine assault on the southern edge of My Tho on the morning of 1 Feb. The 3/47 and 3/60 Bns attacked north astride the reservoir in My Tho, linking up with B Co on the west. By 1800 the VC were driven northwest out of town. ARVN units continued the pursuit up route 6A.

The Mobile Riverine Force was put under the operational control of the Senior Advisor, IV Corps on 1 Feb.

o. Ben Tre.

Ben Tre was attacked at 0415. The VC surrounded the US Advisory Compound south of the city and entered the city by 0630. They remained in control through the night. On 1 Feb the 3/39 Bn, reinforced by B Co, 2/60 Bn combat assaulted at 1835 south of the city and relieved the MACV compound that night.

A composite Bn reinforced the 3/39 Bn on 2 Feb. The city was not completely cleared until 3 Feb.

Ground attacks were launched on 1 Feb in three new locations, while continuing in the CMD. These were against Phu Cuong, Cu Chi and Ba Ria.

p. Phu Cuong.

At 0430 the 1st and 2d Bns of Dong Nai Regiment reinforced by the Phu Loi I Bn attacked Province Headquarters and the Engineer School at Phu Cuong. The enemy quickly penetrated the Engineer School compound and seized control of the northern portion. They occupied sections of the city but were unable to capture the province headquarters. An ARVN reaction force consisting of the 3/9 and 2/8 Inf, 1/1 and 3/1 Cav Sqdns, and 5th Div Recon Co counterattacked. By 1100 they had regained control of the school. By 1830 Phu Cuong was cleared. This action resulted in 98 VC KIA.

The fighting at Phu Cuong spread eastward when elements of the 1/4 Cav and 1/28 Inf, 1st Infantry Division conducted sweeps north of Phu Loi. The night before a 1st Inf Div LRP north of Phu Loi had spotted VC moving southward and called artillery on them. The VC withdrew into the village of An My which included one, possibly two, battalions of the 273d VC Regt. The VC had been attempting to slip past Phu Loi enroute to Thu Duc. The 1st Div cordoned the village, evacuated and screened civilians and then attacked. This action continued through 4 Feb as the Div systematically destroyed the trapped VC force, some plowing much of the village in the end. In these actions 343 VC were killed, and among the weapons captured were 3.81mm mortars with 4 baseplates.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

q. Cu Chi.

At 0110 hours the 7th LF Bn, reinforced, launched a ground and mortar attack on the town and subsector headquarters. VC penetrated the MACV compound and opened the jail. About 50% of the compound was burned. Local RF and PF units, supported by ARVN and US artillery, defended.

At 0320 the 25th Inf Div base camp just to the north received a heavy attack by fire. 10 rounds of 122mm rocket and 200 rounds of 82mm mortar fell, resulting in 1 KIA and 28 WIA.

The VC in Cu Chi began to break contact at 0500. At 0530, D Co 3/22 Inf with one platoon of 4/23 Mech was engaged by VC blocking forces while moving south out of the base camp to relieve the town.

At 0730 the 2/49th ARVN Inf moving to the north toward Cu Chi engaged VC blocking forces. It was reinforced by the 3/49th Inf and 1/10 Cav.

Both US and ARVN units reached the center of town by 1030. The VC forces withdrew from the area at 1145 but contact continued by ARVN until 1830. There were 40 VC KIA in Cu Chi and 25 others outside, 11 of which were killed by artillery. Heavy civil damage was done to the center of Cu Chi.

r. Ba Ria.

On the morning of 1 Feb in Phouc Tuy Province, south of the 1st Australian Task Force Nui Dat Base Camp, the VC D445 Local Force Bn, reinforced by the C610 Ba Ria town company launched multiple attacks. At 0455 two VC companies attacked the RF Ammunition and Logistics compound in the northeast sector of Ba Ria. Heavy contact continued, the RF supported by artillery. The RF kept the VC out of the compound until later relieved. At 0500 about 140 VC attacked JUSPAO, PRU Hq, MSS Adv Hq the MP station and VIS headquarters. One platoon occupied the provincial hospital, Catholic church and town theater. All these facilities, were in the center of Ba Ria astride Highways 15 and 23. At the same time two companies assaulted the bridge at YS375609. The local RF outpost, supported by mortars and artillery, prevented the VC from destroying the bridge.

At 0700 the C1 Co of the D445 Bn assaulted and captured the airstrip adjacent to the Van Keip National Training Center on the east of Ba Ria. At 0830 Co A, 3d Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment with 9 armored personnel carriers counterattacked down Highway 2 from Nui Dat. It was this small armored-infantry force which broke the VC grip on all the key centers in and around Ba Ria, while two ARVN units completed the clearing of the town itself of VC. The Australian force swept to the center of town and cleared the VC from the church, JUSPAO, hospital, VIS, PRU Hq and theater. It then proceeded to the administration and logistical Co compound to resupply the RF force there. Later it relieved the district headquarters and the Van Kiep Training Center, where elements of the 11 Abn Bn were in contact.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Several ARVN units were now converging on the area. Between 0945 and 1230 the 3/52 Inf was combat assaulted from Xuan Loc to LZs west of Ba Ria. This bn commenced clearing operations eastward. The 52d Ranger Bn was airlanded at the Van Kiep Field at 1300 and worked westward into town. At nightfall the 52d Rangers and 3/52 Inf were securing portions of the town. At 0900 the 4/48 Inf Bn, and RD support battalion at Dat Do moved westward to Long Dien by truck, secured the Chieu Hoi village at YS402601 and searched to north and east of Ba Ria. At dark this battalion returned to secure its RD area at Dat Do.

The locus of VC effort shifted to Long Dien on subsequent days. It was not until 4 Feb when the VC were substantially eliminated from the Ba Ria-Long Dien populated area.

s. Action at Xuan Loc.

From the early morning hours of 1 February, numerous reports of enemy activity indicated that an attack on Xuan Loc was imminent. Reports of VC movement and actual sightings caused many local people to leave their rural homes and flock to Xuan Loc. At 011515 Feb all ARVNAF and FWMAF units were placed on red alert status.

At 1550 the first attacks were made on Xuan Loc from the southeast and southwest of the city. Enemy units later identified as the D440th Battalion, 84th Rear Service Group and a Xuan Loc Local Force Sapper Unit took part in these attacks. After the initial attacks, elements of the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, 9th US Infantry Division moved to reinforce Xuan Loc closing at 1630.

The VC attacks were directed at the Province Hq, 18th ARVN Div Hq, headquarters and base camps of the 43d ARVN Regiment and against the 54th US Artillery Group and the 2/35th Arty Bn compounds.

Mutual support between compounds, particularly by mortar and artillery fire, was highly effective in stopping the VC assaults. Howitzers of C Btry, 1/83 Arty Bn (8") fired in close support of the ARVN 52d Ranger Bn compound to halt several attacks. Direct fire by howitzers was used on numerous occasions.

After their first assaults were repulsed, the VC reinitiated attacks on 2 Feb at 0130, 0300, and 0700 hours. The 3/5 ARVN Cav Sqdn, and troop C, 3/5 US Cav Sqdn conducted a sweep around the periphery of Xuan Loc breaking up VC units while the 43d ARVN Regt, RF/PF and National Police cleared the city.

At 2245 the 2d of February the VC attacked again, were repulsed, and by 0700 the next day the city was cleared for the last time.

Although there were several harassing attacks and reported attempts by the VC to launch other attacks the VC did not seriously threaten Xuan Loc again.

Map 8 shows the principal actions on 1 Feb in the key areas of the CMD, Long Binh and Bien Hoa.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In the Long Binh/Bien Hoa area the 199th Bde swept areas adjacent to Ho Nai Village (YT095126) and to the north and east. There were scattered contacts all day with small groups of VC from the 275 Regiment who had no general withdrawal plan. Over 100 VC bodies were located in the area. One heavy contact occurred between 2115 and 2400 as a US company and enemy group clashed.

Near III Corps Headquarters, VC were still holed up in the built-up area across from the airbase. The 3/11 Cav Sqdn with the 2/506 Abn Bn conducted a joint sweep through the village of Ap Thanh (YT015125) against a block established by the 58th RF Bn. Heavy fighting occurred in the built up area until it was cleared at 1830. There were 4 US KIA, 5 WIA and 67 VC KIA, 9 PWs and 53 weapons captured. This action cleared the last pocket of VC from the area between Bien Hoa and Long Binh.

In other parts of the Long Binh complex, the 1/11 Cav Sqdn swept the bamboo area between II Field Force Headquarters and the Ammo Dump as a follow-up to airstrikes. The area was then denuded by Rome Plows removing the concealment offered near friendly installations.

Within the CMD the VC continued to maintain control of downtown Hoc Mon on the 1st, culminating in an unsuccessful attack on the district headquarters at 1815. Just north of the town, along the Saigon River, the 3/17 Air Cav Sqdn engaged and killed 73 VC.

The VC attacked a series of military installations at Go Vap early in the morning, overrunning a PF outpost. As depicted on Map 8, DCG, II FFV had coordinated two areas of operation within the CMD, and formed a Task Force in each area. TF Thebaud with 2 Inf Bns and a Cav Sqdn operated in the Tan Son Nhut area while TF Gibler, with 1 Inf Bn reinforced by a mech company operated in the Race Track area.

At 011100 Feb TF Thebaud made a coordinated attack with the 1st VNMC Task Force north through Go Vap. The Marines had the heaviest going and fighting continued until 1900 when the VC were ejected from Camp Red Ball (a US transportation corps installation) and the ARVN Armored Command Compound. This combined US-VN attack broke the back of the VC north west of Go Vap. Nine NVA were captured and identified as members of the 101st NVA Regiment which had conducted the early morning attacks.

In the vicinity of Saigon the 2/27 Inf Bn made a sweep to the west of Tan Son Nhut and in the rubble of the Textile Mill found 162 VC bodies and 101 weapons from the previous days action.

At the Race Track Cos A and B of the 5/60 Mech Bn joined the 3/7 Inf Bn (TF Gibler) and a four company sweep was initiated. At 1500 one mech co engaged a VC force 3 blocks from the Race Track. The VC fired RPGs from rooftops. The second mech company reinforced, attacked the VC and swept the area after killing 120.

The An Quang Pagoda in Cholon became the focus of heavy fighting when an ARVN unit discovered that a VC headquarters was established there. National Police and VNMC Marines encircled the Pagoda by 1305. Air-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

strikes were called in on the buildings and finally seized by 1705.

In spite of the heavy fighting all through Saigon on 1 February, and the spread of attacks by fire to MACV headquarters, police stations and more GVN installations, it was apparent that the VC neither controlled nor had put out of action any critical installation. The government was still intact and there was no signs of a popular uprising. The 48 hour period before relief was scheduled for the local force units was running out and no relief was in sight. The VC were on the defensive everywhere in Saigon.

Several outposts were attacked in Binh Chanh District and the pattern of attempted LOC interdiction southwest of Saigon began which was to last well into the month of March. Three RF/PF outposts, a base camp of TF Gibler, and the Binh Dien Bridge on Highway 4 were attacked. Highway 4 was cratered both north and south of Binh Chanh.

In Cholon the COFAT compound received a small arms attack; snipers surrounded the technical school adjacent to the Free World Military Assistance Forces Headquarters; and the 593d Signal Company came under mortar attack.

t. Actions 2-5 February.

The Period 2-5 February was transitional between a predominance of VC initiated attacks and the regaining of the initiative by US FWMF and ARVN forces. Map 9 shows events during this period.

In Saigon the VC concentrated their flagging offensive effort in Cholon. They attacked the Nguyen Can Tho and Pham Van Chi Police Stations in the 6th Precinct southwest of Saigon.

The elements of the 273d VC Regiment which had not been trapped in An My launched an anticipated attack in the morning of 2 Feb on Thu Duc District Headquarters and the National Police Station. Having been warned that the VC planned to destroy the large power plant and water treatment works in Thu Duc, a Cavalry reinforced Infantry company of the 1/18 Inf Bn were already in place when the attacks came, and the Bn (-) was in Thu Duc proper. The VC attacks were repulsed.

The VC Regt attacked again in greater strength on the night of 3 Feb, and tried to carry out its mission of destroying the large Newport Bridge linking Saigon and Bien Hoa. One force attacked the Newport Bridge at 0100, the District Headquarters at 0410, and the 2d VNMC Bn compound at 0650. District forces, reinforced by a company from the 1/18 Bn and 3 RF platoons, repulsed the attacks killing over 80 VC. Civil damage was heavy, however, and 38 civilians were killed and 75 houses destroyed. In the attack on the Newport Bridge the VC overran bunkers and the eastern end of the bridge. A relief force of the 1/5 ARVN Cav and elements of the 720th US MP Bn retook the bridge by 0250. Eleven VC were found dead on the bridge but the bridge itself was not damaged. On the night of 2 February the VC attacked a bridge by RPG in Hoc Mon District defended by 25th Inf Div units. At 031500 Feb enemy forces overran a PF unit guarding the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Can Dua bridge and were successful in destroying it.

In Tan Binh District VC conducted mortar and rocket attacks against 3d VNMC Bn outposts at Vinh Loc and US MATS team locations.

While Nha Be district was relatively quiet, a precautionary deployment of the 2/327th Abn Bn was made to the POL storage facility in Nha Be. The Bn was flown by fixed wing air from Song Be to Tan Son Nhut on 2 Feb then moved by helicopter to Nha Be. Together with the 3/11 Cav Sqdn, which had come to Bien Hoa from Loc Ninh, the 2/327th Abn Bn was the only other US maneuver bn which had to be brought into the allied base area from border regions of III CTZ for deployment in the TET offensive.

There were many sightings of VC units and groups moving during daylight around Saigon attempting to consolidate. By this time the 271 and 272 VC Regiments began to move into Hoc Mon District after their plan to relieve Local Force units in Saigon had been threatened. Harassment by gunships, artillery, and sweeps by US or ARVN units initiated by such sightings prevented the massing of any major enemy force. Twenty VC sampans were spotted at night on the Saigon River in Go Vap and were sunk with numerous secondary explosions. The density of VC in a relatively small area caused them to suffer very heavy casualties, and also caused a breakdown in their battlefield police habits. Abandoned crew served weapons and equipment to include radios, as well as the capture of wounded PWs, were indications of how hard hit were VC units northwest of Saigon.

By 5 Feb in the Capital Military District the Commanding Officer of the CMD and the DCG, II FFV had divided their tasks. RVNAF units took over sole responsibility for clearing Saigon of VC, while US units began to operate against VC attempting to base in the outer districts. Map 9 shows the respective AOs on 5 Feb. This map also shows the first step in returning responsibility of outlying CMD areas to the US Divisions from the special CMD Task Force. The 25th Div reassumed control of its forces and the Hoc Mon area from DCG, II FFV on 5 Feb. By this time the locus of the battle began to fall astride the CMD - Hau Nghia boundary, rather than remain inside the CMD.

The increasing concentration of VC in Cholon, where the ARVN Ranger Gp operated, was matched by sharp fighting in Binh Chanh, particularly along the Ben Luc Canal. One combat assault by 3/7 Inf Bn resulted in seven helicopters damaged by fire in the engagement where the VC were deployed along the canal.

During this same 3 day period outside of the CMD there were several other significant contacts.

At Bien Hoa on 3 Feb, the 2/11 Cav Sqdn swept north of the airbase and became heavily engaged in Tan Phu Village. Fighting continued into the night and a company of the 3/506 Abn Bn reinforced. This action resulted in 34 KIA and was the last heavy contact in the Bien Hoa/Long Binh area.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

On 4 Feb at 0115 hours elements of the Dong Nai Regt attacked Tan Uyen. The VC overran the ARVN dependent housing area and occupied a brick factory. At 0330 the VC destroyed the power plant by high explosive. At 0540 the 3/48 ARVN Inf arrived by a route which avoided a VC ambush designed to intercept it. The VC broke contact by 0800. At 0810 one company 2/18 Inf Bn arrived and swept south of Tan Uyen. At 0830 a troop 1/4 Cav Sqdn arrived and pursued the VC to the north.

Phu Hoa Dong Subsector Headquarters, defended only by a PF unit, successfully repulsed a strong attack at 0400 hours on 4 Feb. 16 VC were killed, 8 weapons captured while only 1 PF was killed.

In Long Khanh Province Dinh Quan was attacked on 2 Feb by a VC company which occupied all of the village except the District Headquarters and the artillery position. The 18th ARVN Div relieved the town with the 3/43 Regiment. By 5 Feb all hamlets in the vicinity were secure and Route 20 was opened from the La Nga River to the II Corps boundary.

Attacks by fire continued throughout III CTZ. The heaviest attacks after the 31st of January occurred against the 25th Inf Div base camp at Cu Chi and the 1st Inf Div camp at Lai Khe. Lai Khe received 42 separate attacks by fire between 31 January and 3 Feb, including 141 rounds of 122 mm rocket fire. The rocket fire, however, failed to be a substitute for artillery for the VC. Assaulting units had been led to believe that the rockets preceeding an assault would batter down barbed wire and prepare the way for successful assault. There are no recorded instances in which this occurred. There was a conspicuous absence of promised 120mm mortar fire and 107mm rockets during the attacks. The backbone of the VC attacks remained the 82mm mortar, RPGs, and AK-47s.

It was not until approximately 3 Feb that road and bridge interdictions began to assume serious proportions, and by that time the original purpose had failed - to prevent US or RVNAF reinforcement during the critical 48 hour period following the 31 January attacks. QL1 from Saigon to Cu Chi was interdicted more by the heavy fighting which took place along its length than by specific road blocks. QL4 into the Delta began to be a major target of the VC however.

Chart B shows the comparative battle losses from 31 January through 5 February.

u. Actions 6-19 February.

After 5 Feb the battle around Saigon changed in character. While separate attacks against outlying province and district capitals continued, they were occurring in diminishing frequency and intensity.

Map 10 depicts the main events of this period.

Within Saigon RVNAF units undertook the task of clearing VC out of the city. Clearing the Cholon area fell to the 5th Ranger Group, which

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

found that it lacked the forces to do the job while also securing the Phu Tho Race Track. DCG, II FFV was asked by ARVN if he would redeploy a US unit to the Race Track to free their forces for the city fighting ahead. The 3/7 Inf Bn was redeployed for this purpose on 9 Feb taking over an area of operations outlined by the blue broken lines. On 12 Feb this unit, acting on intelligence from ARVN, found the main VC command post in a pagoda 2 km west of the Race Track. Surrounding it they destroyed the VC defending force and captured the headquarters. Taking 3 PW and killing 49 VC including Gen Tran Do, COSVN political chief who was in command of all VC forces attacking Saigon.

Outside Saigon a number of VC units exfiltrated as shown by broken red lines. But the VC high command, in spite of the failure of their attacks and the losses suffered by its assaulting forces, insisted on continuing offensive action.

Units of the 9th VC Div began to invest the area between Hoc Mon - Cu Chi - Phu Hoa, while elements of the 7th VC Div moved into the Nhi Binh area of the Saigon River. The VC brought in 122mm rockets and attempted to establish a dispersed stronghold north and northwest of Saigon from which they could launch rockets against Tan Son Nhut.

US and ARVN units commenced systematically searching this area. The results were a large number of sharp engagements with relatively small numbers of VC killed in each encounter.

To the east of the Long Binh/Bien Hoa complex the remnants of the VC 274 and 275 Regiments withdrew toward War Zone D. It was during this period, roughly 4-8 February, that the two battalions from the 1st Australian Task Force began to exact their toll from the VC.

Up until 31 January the 1 ATF had been operating offensively to the northeast in AO COLUMBUS. Once the attacks on Long Binh demonstrated that the bulk of the VC were between Long Binh and AO COLUMBUS, the ATF did a tactical about face, and deployed a series of company and platoon sized day and night ambushes between the Dong Nai River and Highway 1.

As depicted on Chart C, the Australians steadily killed small groups of VC withdrawing to the east. The dates of the passage of the bulk of the VC force can be seen in the large number of contacts and kills between 4 and 7 February.

Elsewhere in III CTZ there were a number of significant actions.

On 6 Feb a VC local force battalion attempted to launch a major attack against Tay Ninh City. The Province Chief had received advance warning of this attack, to include the exact direction of the approach. He deployed his reconnaissance platoon in an ambush several km west of the city. The VC walked into the ambush, and then were struck heavily by gunships which came to the aid of the ambush force. The VC fled westward after heavy losses, leaving behind banners which they had intended to parade in the streets of Tay Ninh. They had failed to even reach the city.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

On 10 February the K-3 Bn, Dong Nai Regiment attacked Tan An from the west of 0255 hours. In order to reinforce the attack, hastily recruited fillers from 17 different infiltration groups were committed with the battalion. Many of these fillers had virtually no training. The main attack was repulsed by RF/PF forces and National Police who killed 103 VC and captured 22 while losing 3 RF, 8 NP and 1 ARVN KIA. The 3d Brigade headquarters area of the 9th US Inf Div defended its own compound in Tan An killing 19 VC. Indiscriminant mortaring by the VC caused 25 civilians KIA and 125 WIA in the city.

2d
WAVE
Captured documents show that COSVN ordered a second wave of attacks to be launched which were to be stronger than the first attacks on 31 Jan. These attacks occurred on the night of 17-18 February. The "wave" was feeble by comparison with the earlier TET assaults. Their scope is shown on Map 11. There were 10 ground attacks and 57 attacks by fire. The VC lost 446 killed at an allied cost of 28 US and 82 ARVN KIA.

The heaviest fighting of the second wave occurred in Song Be where two infiltration group battalions - the 211 and 212 - seized the western half of Song Be City. They were driven out by 2 companies of 31st ARVN Rangers and elements of the 101st US Abn Div after extensive damage was done to civilian houses. Over 100 VC bodies were found in the rubble.

As action subsided from the second wave on 18 February, it was clear that the enemy lacked the strength to mount serious new attacks against the key areas in III CTZ. The essential defensive battle of TET was over.

Chart D shows the total battle losses from 29 January through 19 February. 12,614 NVA/VC were killed at a cost of 944 US/FWF/RVNAF KIA, a ratio of 13.36 to 1.

An analysis of the reported body count revealed that the very large number of VC/NVA reported killed was the result of many small contacts rather than a few large ones (in which the margin for error in reporting is proportionately greater). A detailed machine record analysis of contacts resulting in 8,021 of the reported killed revealed that they were killed in 849 separate successful contacts. That is an average of less than 10 per contact. Only 2264 of the 8024 were reported killed in the 13 engagements claiming over 100 VC dead, while 1880 were reported killed in 686 contacts claiming less than 10 VC KIA. The Australian kills on Chart C demonstrate this characteristic in detail: 202 killed in 60 contacts averaging 3.3.

The results of this analysis tend to substantiate the belief of this command that VC/NVA forces lost nearly 20% of its 29 January strength killed in 20 days.

→ v. Results of offensive on US/FWF/GVN.

From 29 Jan through 19 February: US forces lost 453 killed and 3,625 wounded. ARVN (III Corps) lost 471 killed and 1290 wounded. Australian, New Zealand and Thailand forces lost 20 killed and 83 wounded.

No US/FWF/ARVN maneuver units from company size were destroyed or rendered combat ineffective during the offensive.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The 58,000 RF/PF personnel manned over 650 outposts in III CTZ during the period. 63 of these outposts, or less than 10% were seriously damaged or destroyed. 22 were overrun and 5 abandoned without contact. 221 RF/PF were killed, 481 wounded and 68 were missing. One RF company was rendered combat ineffective by hostile action.

There were a few cases of RF/PF outposts being defeated by treacherous action from within. In the worst case 37 RF/PF and 2 US were murdered in the La Cua outpost in Hau Nghia Province by VC who had penetrated the organization.

National Police Forces were a target of the VC. Within the Saigon/Gia Dinh complex 87 police were killed and 326 wounded out of 16,839 assigned, about half of whom were on leave at the outbreak of hostilities. Outside of this complex an additional 45 police were killed and 139 wounded of 11,500 assigned. Province police headquarters in Hau Nghia, Binh Duong and Phouc Tuy Provinces received substantial damage. In Saigon the VC heavily damaged police stations in the 5th, 6th and 7th precincts.

The RD effort was clearly not one of the immediate targets of the VC. However, the offensive set back the pacification programs in III CTZ. Many Revolutionary Development Cadre were withdrawn from their assigned hamlets to help with the security of their respective district or provincial capitals or to perform other missions to help the many refugees. Before TET cadre were in 92 hamlets. By 1 March they were back in 83, although 24 teams were still in hamlets due to be completed in 1967. The VC penetrated about 50% of the hamlets pacified during the 1967 campaign. But 90% of the hamlets entered had an RD group or 5 man stay behind element in it. With the exception of Binh Duong Province, the VC caused little or no physical damage to the hamlets, confining most of their activities to propaganda and efforts to force the population to provide them with logistical support. Out of 5518 RD cadre 24 were killed and 7 captured during February.

Of the 46 operational DIOCC in III CTZ only one was totally destroyed and two damaged.

The Chieu Hoi program received a distinct set back. The returnee rate dropped to an all time low of only 107 for February, and remained low.

There were no sector or subsector headquarters overrun, although many were surrounded and besieged for periods of time.

While LOC eventually became a target of the VC, initially they did little damage to roads, bridges or culverts. Only 1 bridge was dropped on 30 Jan, 3 on 2 Feb. By 19 February 9 bridges had been destroyed and 5 damaged.

Civilian
The offensive created well over 100,000 refugees, 67,000 in Gia Dinh. 11,000 houses were 50-100% destroyed. The heaviest civil damage was in Thu Duc, Hoc Mon, Go Vap, Duc Hue, Long Dien, Song Be and Ba Ria. At least \$20 million damage was done to industrial and commercial enterprises

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

with another \$8-10 million damage to structures housing these enterprises. Food stocks dropped and prices soared during the peak of the Tet attacks, but by the end of the month there were no critical shortages and prices had returned to normal.

Of the eleven provinces in III CTZ, Hau Nghia, Phouc Long and Binh Long were the most adversely affected.

NVA Casualties

w. Results of offensive on VC/NVA.

VC/NVA forces lost 12,614 killed, 864 personnel and 3089 weapons captured in the offensive.

The impact of these losses were both qualitative as well as quantitative. Chart E shows the degradation in combat effectiveness of those 54 enemy maneuver battalions which were in III CTZ on 29 January. This chart does not take into account the factor of undetected replacements received during the period, but it has been determined that the replacements received during the offensive were far short of the losses suffered.

*WPV3
comp*

A large number of crew served weapons were captured, including 82mm mortars and anti-aircraft machine guns. These were taken as often as not on sweeps of the battlefield conducted the day after an action. This is unusual, for rigorous police of the battlefield is a characteristic of VC and NVA units. It indicates how severely the units were hit. Over 60 pistols were captured. These are habitually carried only by leaders.

Because the enemy chose to commit local force units initially, these elements in suffering heavy losses degraded their capability to support NVA main force units in preparing the battlefield, furnishing guides, carrying out ancillary combat tasks, and policing the battlefield. As a result many NVA main force units had to try to fulfill the role of the local forces. Lacking detailed knowledge of the terrain and population several such units were destroyed, and scattered, or made ineffective by allied action.

Several reports indicate that as early as 16 January political cadre were being ordered to join military units as fillers in order to bring those units up to strength for a maximum effort. In addition preparations were made in such detail as to have provisional governments standing by to assume the leadership of the expected popular uprising. As a result a few thousand of the 47,014 enemy casualties reported in South Viet Nam are assumed to have been infrastructure members. The number of cadre actually killed in III Corps is unknown. At no prior time during the insurgency has there been indications of such a loss of political cadre. Though some of these were already compromised and can now be replaced with personnel having better "covers", their replacement by either infiltration or recruitment should pose the same difficulties which led to the understrength posture of the combat units originally.

These losses have left the infrastructure particularly vulnerable at the district and city level, where failure to replace lost cadre may result in the temporary breakdown of control in selected urban areas.

x. Conclusion:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The VC/NVA TET offensive aimed at no less an objective than winning the war with one stroke aimed at the heart of political and administrative power in South Vietnam-Saigon. Militarily it was a complete failure for the VC. Its political impact is both harder to judge and beyond the scope of this report. But it must be concluded that whatever political gains were made were bought at an enormous cost to both VC and NVA in terms of trained men and organized units. It was a price which neither North Vietnam nor the NFLA can afford for long. The amount of damage done to US and ARVN forces was slight by comparison, and out of the battle ARVN emerged with an unprecedented rise in self-confidence. The civil cost was considerable, but not catastrophic, nor permanent. NFL claims to represent the people were shown to be patently false as the popular uprising - a central assumption in NVA planning - failed to materialize in spite of the sudden display of NVA/VC strength throughout III CTZ. The continued weakening of "war of liberation" techniques has been shown as North Vietnam increasingly has had to replace VC losses by outside infiltrators and not by NFLA recruitment. This in turn has been reflected in the lesser guerrilla skills of NVA units when operating near populated areas, making their detection and defeat easier, and forcing them to rely more on outside support and better weapons to survive and operate. The impact of the TET offensive on the course of the war has yet to be determined, but it is clear that it has brought the war closer to resolution either by military or political action.

y. Lessons Learned.

VC/NVA forces are willing to sacrifice military units, suffer heavy casualties, and risk military defeats to create an international image of strength. Calculations of threat based solely on enemy military capabilities and national military strategy may be seriously misleading.

Maximum use of spoiling attacks against intermediate enemy base areas will reduce the momentum of the main attack and prevent most of the enemy forces from reaching populated areas. The enemy's intermediate bases are normally located along infiltration routes. Infiltration and exfiltration routes tend to coincide. Therefore, the employment of this tactic, in conjunction with all available fire support, inflicts maximum enemy losses and avoids the heavier military casualties, physical destruction and civilian casualties normally associated with fighting in urban areas.

The enemy moved sizeable groups of personnel and significant materiel support into Saigon and other critical areas before the offensive began. Friendly forces were not warned of these actions by the local population which was either indifferent to the enemy's presence, supported him passively, or was afraid of enemy reprisal in the event his presence was disclosed. Allied forces had no information base in the local population.

The VC and NVA are capable of infiltrating all the supplies they require to sustain their operations. Surveillance, control, and interdiction of waterways in III CTZ are inadequate to stop this flow.

Damage to property and both civilian and military casualties in urban areas can be reduced by the use of riot control agent CS. While not the sole means of achieving these goals, CS was employed effectively to drive enemy personnel from buildings and fortified positions. This increased the enemy's vulnerability to allied firepower and lessened the requirement to engage in sustained combat in urban areas. Prior planning for the rapid employment of CS facilitates the conduct of fighting in urban areas.

The experience gained during the conduct of combined operations with RVNAF

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

prior to the TET Offensive was of great value during the TET offensive. US/FWMAF/RVNAF units gained a better appreciation of the strengths, weaknesses, capabilities and operating procedures of other allied nations. This reduced the reaction time required to counter enemy threats and enhanced coordination and cooperation at all echelons. It also developed a high degree of mutual confidence and understanding among the allied nations which facilitated the application of overwhelming firepower and mobility against the enemy. Regular combined operations with participation by forces from all allied nations will enhance combat readiness for and facilitate conduct of operations during periods of crisis such as the initial days of the TET offensive.

Air Cavalry units were employed effectively in screening and economy of force roles in intermediate enemy base areas and along suspected infiltration and exfiltration routes. When the requirement exists for conducting operations in areas where other combat forces cannot be made available, air cavalry units are well suited for this purpose.

The enemy turned a decisive military defeat into a psychological gain. Despite heavy losses, he mounted an offensive of sizable proportions and demonstrated his capability to conduct coordinated attacks by fire and maneuver over widely dispersed locations. Politically he gained world-wide attention and may have enhanced his position at the current peace negotiations.


FRED C. WEYAND

Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

ANNEXES:

- A - Intelligence.
- B - US/FWMAF Troop List.
- C - ARVN Troop List.
- D - Command Precautions.
- E - Significant Actions.
- F - Role of Armor.
- G - Artillery.
- H - MACCORDS.
- I - III Corps Advisory Group.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ANNEX A (Intelligence) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (C) GENERAL: Captured documents as well as interrogations of PWs and ralliers clearly indicate that the enemy undertook the TET Offensive for the purpose of capturing and holding key installations in SAIGON as well as provincial capitals and for the subsidiary purpose of overrunning key RVN and US military headquarters and airbases, i.e., III Corps, II FFORCEV, BIEN HOA and TAN SON NHUT. Had the offensive succeeded, the VC intended to establish a revolutionary government or at least be in a position of strength from which to call for peace negotiations on their terms.

2. (C) BACKGROUND:

a. Map #2 depicts significant VC/NVA unit moves which were detected during December and January. These moves indicated a definite shift of forces throughout the III CTZ. In retrospect, it is possible that the enemy's repositioning of his forces and his attacks in late 1967 and early 1968 may have been designed to draw friendly troops away from the populated areas of the III CTZ setting the stage for the TET Offensive.

b. During the period November 1967 through January 1968, the VC/NVA elements subordinate to COSVN in the III CTZ conducted three phases in their DONG XUAN (Winter-Spring) Campaign, which is believed to have begun on 29 October with the multi-regimental size attack against the LOC NINH area in northern BINH LONG Province. The attacks were conducted primarily by major elements of the 9th VC Division, as well as elements of the 141st and the 165th NVA Regiments of the 7th NVA Division. The action was supported by the 69th VC Artillery Command. Although the action at LOC NINH was a massive military loss to the VC, it was nevertheless, a significant political victory in as much as the VC succeeded in dispersing the populace and in holding the village for a short time. The second phase of the campaign was oriented on the BU DOP - BO DUC area in northern PHUOC LONG Province. The third phase began as an apparent counter mission in eastern War Zone "C". On 31 January 1968, the emphasis changed radically as the enemy began large scale attacks in the SAIGON - BIEN HOA - LONG BINH areas coordinated with lesser attacks throughout the remainder of the II FFORCEV TAOI. It apparently signalled the beginning of the TET Offensive.

3. (C) MAJOR ENEMY INITIATED ACTIONS:

a. General.

(1) While the general counter-offensive plan in I and II CTZ was executed on or about 291800H Jan 68, it was not until 310300H Jan 68 that the VC counter-offensive was launched in III CTZ. The VC operational plan was apparently as follows (Map #4):

(a) 9th VC Div:

1. 271st Regt : Attack selected GVN/

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ARVN targets, QUANG TRUNG Training Center in the HOC MON area; block allied reaction by interdicting Route 1; on order reinforce and exploit success in the northern SAIGON area.

2. 272d Regt: Supported by local forces, to block reaction of the US 25th Div from the CU CHI - DAU THIENG area; on order, to reinforce to the northwest of SAIGON.

3. 273d Regt: 1st Bn - attack THU DUC District Office, construct defense works against reaction from BIEN HOA; 2d Bn - attack 2d VNMC Bn, reinforce 3d Bn; 3d Bn - intercept Allied reaction forces from DI AN; Sapper Co - blow up bridge at BINH LOI.

(b) 7th NVA Div:

1. 165th NVA Regt: Contain 1st US Inf Div in vicinity LAI KHE and interdict Hwy 13.

2. 141st NVA Regt: Although mission was unclear, it apparently was tasked to interdict Hwy 13 S of AN LOC.

3. 101st NVA Regt: The regiment, which had been resubordinated from the 7th NVA Division to Sub-Region 1, was to secure the area north of SAIGON in vicinity of GO VAP.

(c) DONG NAI Regt: Given Bn missions - 1st Bn to seize and hold TAN UYEN; other elements participated in the attack on PHU LOI - PHU CUONG, supported by PHU LOI I Bn. The former K3 Bn moved to LONG AN Province with the mission to seize TAN AN.

(d) 88th NVA Regt: Block Hwy 13 vicinity AN LOC - CHON THANH, possibly in conjunction with 141st NVA Regt.

(e) In the SAIGON - CHOLON - TAN SON NHUT area the attacks were conducted by the C-10 Sapper Bn, 2d Independent Bn, 2d, 5th, 6th Local Force Bns, 267th and 269th MF Bns, D-16 Bn, possibly the 3d Bn, 271st VC Regt, and supported by the 1st LF, 3d MF, and 4th LF Bns. Their missions were: To seize and hold TAN SON NHUT AB and possibly the adjacent Vice-Presidential Palace; to seize and hold the Presidential Palace; to seize and hold the US and Phillipine Embassies; to seize and hold or destroy selected objectives such as National Police Stations, power plants, and other GVN installations. The primary purpose was to disrupt the GVN and the city of SAIGON as much as possible, to cause the GVN and US Government to "lose face", and to force the GVN to the conference table with the NFLSVN and/or NVN where they could negotiate from a position of strength. These units were to have been reinforced within 48 hours, according to prisoner reports.

(f) Sub-Region 1: 7th LF Bn - seize and hold CU CHI.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

(g) Sub-Region 2: 506th LF Bn - seize and hold DUC HOA to include HQ, 25th ARVN Div.

(h) Sub-Region 3: Local forces - harass GVN installations by fire; assist in passage of forces attacking SAIGON; conduct harassing attacks by fire and provide security for command and control element conducting attacks on SAIGON.

(i) Sub-Region 4: Local forces - harass GVN installations by fire.

(j) Sub-Region 5: The DONG NAI Regt was to seize and hold PHU LOI - PHU CUONG - TAN UYEN.

(k) VC BA BIEN Province: D440 Bn - seize and hold XUAN LOC, 18th ARVN Div HQ; D445 - seize and hold BA RIA.

(l) VC MY THO Province: 261st, 263d MF Bns and 514th LF Bn seize and hold MY THO; 516th & 518th LF Bn - seize and hold BEN TRE.

(m) War Zone "C" and MR 10: Local forces supported by COSVN security units, rear service units, and artillery units, were to pin down Allied forces by conducting harassing attacks by fire against Allied installations and Fire Support Patrol Bases (FSPB).

(2) All these attacks were supported by local force units who probably had the mission of assisting the main attacks by providing guides and security forces, as well as conducting harassing attacks on either pre-planned targets or targets of opportunity. Although these attacks were apparently well planned and coordinated at the higher levels, in several instances, notably at BIEN HOA - LONG BINH, the participating units did a poor job in executing their assigned missions. Assault units were told to hold their objectives from 48 hours (SAIGON) to one week (BIEN HOA - LONG BINH). The 5th VC Div was told they would have an easy job. A unique feature of this offensive was that no unit was given a withdrawal route, although the 5th VC Div had rallying points, evidently in the expectation that the attack would be a complete success. One notable failure by the VC concerns the 273d Regiment whose plan was to attack in the THU DUC area and block Allied reaction forces. The 273d was evidently delayed in its move, prompting elements of the 1st and 2d Bns to get involved in the fighting at PHU LOI - PHU CUONG on 1 Feb and become trapped in the cordon and search of AN MY by the US 1st Division on 1 and 2 Feb. Only headquarters elements and the 3d Bn were identified in the vicinity of their objectives.

b. Major Actions 31 Jan 68: Enemy initiated actions on 31 Jan 68 are depicted on Map #5 (red arrows show ground attacks; red dots indicate attacks by fire). The primary attacks were those at LONG BINH, BIEN HOA, TAN SON NHUT, and SAIGON. In addition, not shown on the map was an attack on DUC HOA targeted against the HQ of the 25th ARVN Div, as well as heavy attacks at BEN CAT, BEN TRE, and MY THO. The major attack

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

by fire alone was at the 25th US Div base camp at CU CHI, which received 249 rounds of mortar fire between 0305 and 0635 hours, wounding 10 US personnel. The 1st US Div base camp at LAI KHE also received a heavy attack by fire. At 310300H Jan, Camp FRENZELL JONES (199th LIB) and the Plantation (HQ, II FFV) received an estimated 90-100 rounds of mixed 82mm mortar and 122mm rocket fire. At 0430H, two battalions of the 275th VC Regt launched a ground attack on the west and north perimeter of this installation while sapper units supported by the U-1 LF Bn harassed the eastern perimeter while attempting to penetrate and destroy the ammo storage area. At least one company of this force attempted to seize the PW compound. Also at 310300H Jan, BIEN HOA Air Base received an estimated 35 rounds of 122mm rocket fire followed by a ground attack conducted by two battalions of the 274th VC Regt. At 0300 hours the SAIGON - CHOLON - TAN SON NHUT area came under intensive ground attacks. The major objectives of this attack were: (1) seizure of TAN SON NHUT AB (including the JGS Compound and Vice Presidential Palace by the 267th, 269th, and 2d Ind Bns which were to have been supported by elements of the 271st and 272d VC Regts; (2) seizure or destruction of the US Embassy, Presidential Palace, and SAIGON Radio Station by elements of the C-10 Sapper Bn & 3d & 4th LF Bns; (3) seizure of the CHI HOA Prison and release of prisoners by the 6th LF Bn. These major attacks were supported by the 1st MF and 2d LF Bns attacking from the north; the D-16 Bn from the west; the 5th LF and 506th Bn from the south, and the 4th LF Bn from the east.

c. Major Actions, 1 Feb 68: Enemy initiated actions on 1 Feb 68 are depicted on Map #8. The primary attacks were those at PHU CUONG and CU CHI. In addition, not shown on the map were two attacks targeted against BA RIA and XUAN LOC. The major attack by fire above was again at the 25th US Div base camp at CU CHI, which received 180 rounds of mortar fire as well as 10 x 122mm rockets, killing 1 and wounding 28 US soldiers. LAI KHE also received another heavy attack by fire. At 010120H Feb, the 7th LF Bn with elements of the 8th Arty Bn in support, attacked the CU CHI Subsector compound with small arms, automatic weapons, and RPG fire. At times up to 50% of the compound was burning although it was never penetrated. The VC broke contact at the compound at 0410 hours while fighting continued in the town throughout the day. US and ARVN elements reacting to the attacks were engaged outside of town by VC blocking forces. These blocking forces were pushed aside and friendly elements were in town by 1000 hours. There were eight US WIA, three ARVN WIA and one APC damaged. There were 38 VC KIA, two PW's, nine individual and five crew-served weapons captured. At 010510H Feb, the city of PHU CUONG and the ARVN Engineer School were attacked by the 1st and 2d Bns, DONG NAI Regt, possibly supported by the PHU LOI I Bn and elements of the 273d VC Regt as well as local force units. The Engineer School was penetrated from the north and was partly occupied until 1100 hours when US and ARVN armor and infantry units regained control of the school. Fighting continued throughout the day, spreading to nearby AN MY and PHU LOI. The city of PHU CUONG was cleared by 1830 hours at a cost of three US KIA, 24 ARVN KIA, two US WIA, 10 ARVN WIA, one tank and two APC's destroyed and one tank damaged. There were 98 VC KIA,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

seven PW's, 19 individual and nine crew-served weapons captured. Heavy fighting continued in SAIGON and the HOC MON areas.

d. Major Actions, 2 Feb 68: Map #9 includes enemy initiated actions on 2 Feb. The major attack was at THU DUC by elements of the 273d VC Regt which had been badly hurt at AN MY by elements of the 1st US Inf Div on 1 Feb. The attack at THU DUC was promptly reacted to by elements of the 1st US Inf Div, 11th Armd Cav Regt, and VNMC. In addition, but not shown on the map, were heavy attacks on BAO TRAI, PHU GIAO, and DINH QUAN. The major attacks by fire were again at the US 25th Div base camp at CU CHI, which received 10 x 122mm rockets and 111 mixed 82mm mortar and 75mm recoilless rifle fire. During this attack, an ammo storage dump blew up, destroying or damaging 100% of the buildings in two battalions areas. The 1st US Inf Div base camp at LAI KHE also received another heavy attack by fire. Heavy fighting continued in SAIGON as the Allies cleaned out pockets of resistance and the VC continued to attempt to infiltrate small groups of men into the city in an apparent desperate effort to accomplish as much damage as possible. Fighting also continued in the areas of MY THO, BEN TRE, BA RIA, and XUAN LOC.

e. Major Actions, 3 Feb 68: (Refer to Map #9) The major attack was again at THU DUC by elements of the 273d VC Regt. This attack was promptly reacted to by elements of the 1st US Inf Div, 11th US Armd Cav Regt, and the VNMC. This action resulted in 108 VC KIA. Attacks by fire continued throughout the III CTZ. An example of the intensity of these attacks is the 1st US Inf Div base camp at LAI KHE which between 310300H Jan and 032400H Feb received 42 attacks by fire which included 141 x 122mm rockets, 169 rounds of 82mm mortars, 21 rounds of 75 RR, three rounds RPG, and six unidentified rounds; a total of 340 rounds resulting in one US KIA, 124 WIA and one VN civilian killed and 34 injured. Heavy fighting still continued in SAIGON as well as in the HOC MON area, although the VC attempted no major actions.

f. Major Actions 4 and 5 Feb 68: (Refer to Map #9). Although overall enemy activity decreased slightly, strong resistance to Allied sweep and clearing operations was demonstrated throughout the area. Enemy activity was highlighted by battalion size ground attacks at PHU HOA DONG (vic XT 7219) on 4 Feb, at BEN CAT on 4 Feb, and an estimated two VC companies attacked an RF OP at HOC MON (vic XT 7604) on 5 Feb. In VC Sub-Region 5, ground attacks were conducted against TAN UYEN on 4 Feb and PHU CUONG (XT 8114) on 5 Feb. Although not shown on the map a major contact occurred vic XS 473488 in VC MY THO Province on 4 Feb, where elements of the 7th ARVN Division contacted an estimated two VC battalions. In the SAIGON - CHOLON metropolitan area, enemy activity decreased to light contacts and sniping incidents primarily in CHOLON, PHU THO, and near the JGS Compound.

g. Major Actions From 6-18 Feb: The major enemy initiated actions are depicted on Map #10. Since 4 Feb, battalion sized ground attacks gradually decreased in the III CTZ. Enemy and friendly action centered on three main axes to SAIGON: GO DAU HA - TAN SON NHUT, PHU CUONG - THU DUC and BINH CHANH - CHOLON. The enemy attempted to maintain large

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

numbers of organized troops in the GO MON - HOC MON area, principally the 271st and 272d VC Regiments, which vigorously resisted Allied sweeps. These units apparently retained the mission of reinforcing VC units in SAIGON. While the VC attempted to infiltrate small groups of men into SAIGON, enemy units and individuals within the city continued to resist Allied mop-up actions. Throughout this period the enemy continued to attack major installations such as LAI KHE, CU CHI, TAN SON NHUT Air Base and BIEN HOA Air Base by fire.

h. The Second Wave 17-18 Feb 68: On 17-18 Feb the enemy conducted an apparently coordinated series of attacks by fire and ground attacks throughout the III CTZ as depicted on Map #11. The coordinated harassing activities and the resumption of ground attacks, in conjunction with indications of heavy re-supply activity, indicated that the enemy had used the relative lull of the previous two weeks to attempt to re-establish his control structure and combat posture. His efforts proved abortive. VC ground activity in the second wave spread outward from the SAIGON area, and was apparently conducted by local force elements occasionally supported by main force elements. The VC command and control structure had been badly damaged as indicated by the numerous battalion commanders and political leaders killed during the initial phases of the campaign. There were other indicators, besides the large enemy casualties reported, that the VC suffered heavy losses. An example of this is a group of prisoners from the 273d VC Regiment captured near THU DUC who stated that they were sick but had been ordered from the hospital back to the 273d as replacements, indicating that the regiment had suffered heavy personnel losses, as was reported after the actions at AN MY and THU DUC where the 273d Regiment had been identified in contact.

→ 4. (C) SUMMARY: The VC TET offensive, while successfully harassing US and GVN forces, failed to accomplish its military objectives. The VC propaganda machinery will emphasize the political and psychological aspects of the campaign to offset its military failures. Probably his only military success was the fact that he was able to mount an offensive on the scale he did. The major causes for his failure were:

a. Overestimation of his own offensive capabilities, coupled with the failure of several of his major units to accomplish their missions, notably the 7th NVA Division.

b. As a corollary to the above, his underestimation of the Allied reaction capability, especially that of the VNAF.

c. His overestimation of the peoples desire or willingness to rise against the GVN.

d. His underestimation of the stability of the GVN and its ability to not only withstand, but react to his pressure.

APPENDICIES:

- 1 - VC Order of Battle
- 2 - Special Tactics
- 3 - Invasion Routes

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 1 (VC Order of Battle) to Annex A (Intelligence) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (U) GENERAL:

a. Listed herein are the VC/NVA infantry battalions and regiments in the III CTZ. The following factors are indicated under the VC unit designation:

- (1) Pre-TET strength
- (2) Pre-TET combat effectiveness
- (3) Post-TET strength
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness
- (5) A brief statement of the mission and effectiveness of the unit during the TET Offensive.

b. Abbreviations for combat effectiveness are:

- (1) Fully Combat Effective - FCE
- (2) Combat Effective - CE
- (3) Marginally Combat Effective - MCE
- (4) Not Combat Effective - NCE

2. (C) VC ORDER OF BATTLE:

a. 274th VC Regiment (-):

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 1300
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 900
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness - NCE
- (5) During the TET Offensive this unit operated under the control of the 5th VC Division with the mission of seizing BIEN HOA Air Base, HQ III Corps, and possibly the city of BIEN HOA. While it did penetrate the air base perimeter it never materially affected the operation of the air base.

b. 275th VC Regiment:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 1500
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 900
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness - NCE
- (5) This unit operated under the control of the 5th VC Division with the mission of seizing HQ, II FFORCEV and the remainder of LONG BINH Post. Its only accomplishment was to tie up enough US forces to permit sappers and local forces to penetrate

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

the ammo storage area and blow up four pads of ammunition.

c. 261st VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 330
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 190
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness - NCE
- (5) In conjunction with the 263d and 514th Inf Bns this unit's mission was to seize and hold the city of MY THO. The city was occupied for 48 hours before the VC were driven out.

d. 263d VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 190
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness - NCE
- (5) This unit participated in the attack on MY THO (see 2d above), in addition, the unit conducted an attack against elements of the 9th US Division at FSPB JAEGER where nine US APCs were destroyed.

e. 267th VC MF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 275
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 200
- (4) Post-TET combat effectiveness - MCE
- (5) The battalion, in conjunction with other battalions, was to seize or render inoperable TAN SON NHUT Air Base. The battalion was not very effective in the attack and, in addition, lost most of its heavy weapons at the base of fire/OP at the VINETEXCO Textile Mill. It was identified in HAU NGHIA Province where it could have been operating with the D-16 VC Infantry Battalion.

f. 269th VC MF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 300
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 150
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE
- (5) This unit was the spearhead of the attack at TAN SON NHUT Air Base where it managed to penetrate as far as the runway, causing the air base to become temporarily inoperable. However, it, too, lost most of its heavy weapons at the Textile Mill.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

g. 2d Independent Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 240
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 185
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE
- (5) The unit participated in the assault on TAN SON NHUT Air Base, and lost most of its heavy weapons at the Textile Mill. The unit was also in contact at the PHU THO Race Track.

h. 506th VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 250
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 175
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE
- (5) This battalion had two missions for which it was divided into two elements; one element was to seize BAO TRAI, while the other was to seize the southwestern portion of CHOLON. The element at CHOLON was fairly effective and operated in the area for several days before being driven out.

i. 514th VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 340
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 230
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This battalion was one of the three with the objective of seizing MY THO. The city was occupied for 48 hours by the VC.

j. 516th VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 500
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 340
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE
- (5) This battalion had the mission to seize BEN TRE and was very effective, occupying most of the city for two days before being evicted.

k. 518th VC MF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 250
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- (3) Post-TET strength - 250
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This unit did not have an identifiable mission during the TET Offensive.

1. D445 VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 350
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 225
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This battalion's mission was to seize and hold BA RIA. It attacked and occupied portions of the village for 48 hours.

m. D440 VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 300
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 250
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This battalion attacked XUAN LOC two days in succession but never held any section of the city.

n. D-14 VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 275
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 200
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This unit's mission was never clearly ascertained, as it was identified in several small contacts in HAU NGHIA Province as well as at TAY NINH.

o. PHU LOI II VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 280
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) Prior to TET, the Bn moved to CAMBODIA, picked up some replacements, the moved to LONG AN Province. A PW report stated the unit's mission during TET was to conduct countersweep operations in Sub-Region 3. No known contact with the battalion was reported by Allied Forces during this particular time frame.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

p. K-3 VC Inf Bn (formerly part of the DONG NAI Regt):

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 450
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 350
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) This battalion left the DONG NAI Regiment approximately one month prior to TET and moved to LONG AN Province, and then attacked TAN AN where it proved ineffective.

q. D-16 VC Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 350
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 175
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE

(5) This battalion's mission was to protect the base of fire/OP at the Textile Mill at TAN SON NHUT Air Base, as well as placing suppressive fires on the air base perimeter. It was further identified in contacts in HAU NGHIA Province where it may have possibly been operating with the 267th VC Infantry Battalion.

r. DONG NAI VC MF Infantry Regiment:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 2200
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 1700
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) The DONG NAI Regiment is known to be composed of three maneuver battalions, designated K1, K2 and K3. K1 Bn was formerly the D800 VC LF Bn; K2 Bn was formerly the 7th Bn/568th Regt/330th NVA Division, and the K3 Bn was formerly the PHU LOI I VC LF Bn. The regiment had the mission during TET of seizing PHU CUONG. The regiment did overrun and temporarily occupy the ARVN Engineer School at PHU CUONG before being ejected by ARVN and US units. The regiment then attacked TAN UYEN which it occupied for several hours before again being ejected by US and ARVN units. A captured document removed from the body of the Regimental XO stated the regiment had a strength of only 1100 men. Meanwhile, the K3 Battalion moved to LONG AN Province and then moved to attack TAN AN on 10 Feb. This was not an aggressive attack and did not accomplish its objective. All elements of the regiment have been identified periodically in small unit contacts since TET. If the strength figures in the captured documents are correct, this regiment would be non-combat effective.

s. 165th NVA Infantry Regiment:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 1570
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(3) Post-TET strength - 1570

(4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) This regiment had the mission of interdicting Hwy 13 to prevent Allied reinforcement and to provide area security. The regiment was given a change in mission and sent to the PHU CUONG - PHU LOI area where it could be used for either a reserve or as a security force.

t. 88th NVA Infantry Regiment:

(1) Pre-TET strength - 1450

(2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE

(3) Post-TET strength - 1350

(4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE

(5) The initial mission of this unit was area security along Hwy #13 vicinity south of AN LOC. The unit later received a mission change and moved down to the PHU HOA DONG area.

u. 141st NVA Infantry Regiment:

(1) Pre-TET strength - 1700

(2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE

(3) Post-TET strength - 1525

(4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) This regiment was assigned the mission of area security and interdiction of Hwy 13 in the vicinity south of AN LOC to prevent Allied reinforcement. After failure of the initial mission the regiment moved to the vicinity of PHU HOA DONG - HOC MON area where it was identified in small unit contacts.

v. 271st VC Infantry Regiment:

(1) Pre-TET strength - 1500

(2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE

(3) Post-TET strength - 900

(4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE

(5) The 271st was to move into the HOC MON area to assist in the attack on the TAN SON NHUT Air Base and Joint General Staff Headquarters, then reinforce LF and MF battalions in SAIGON.

w. 272d VC Infantry Regiment:

(1) Pre-TET strength - 1500

(2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE

(3) Post-TET strength - 900

(4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(5) This unit was to move into the CU CHI area, attack the rear Command Post of the US 25th Infantry Division and then continue south into the GO VAP area and reinforce the attack on SAIGON.

x. 273d VC Infantry Regiment:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 1450
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 980
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE

(5) The 273d was to move into the THU DUC area where the 1st Battalion was to capture the District Chief's Headquarters. The 2d Battalion was to attack the 2d VMMC Battalion and overrun the THU DUC Military School and the 3d Battalion was to intercept elements of the 1st Infantry Division attempting to reinforce from DI AN. The Regimental Engineer Company was to seize and hold the BINH LOI Bridge.

y. C-10 Sapper Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 250
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - N/A
- (3) Post-TET strength - 28
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - N/A

(5) Elements of this unit infiltrated into SAIGON and attacked the Presidential Palace, the US Embassy and the JGS Compound.

z. 1st VC MF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 250
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE

(5) The unit participated in the attack on the JGS Compound in SAIGON and considered to have lost 125 personnel in this attack.

aa. 2d VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 300
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) The unit took part in the attack on the JGS Compound, CO LOA Artillery Compound and was in the vicinity of the race track.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

bb. 3d VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 375
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 335
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE
- (5) The unit's TET mission was to take the SAIGON Radio Station. Its attack was not aggressively carried out and management was poor with only 20 men getting inside the station.

cc. 4th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 175
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 150
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE
- (5) During TET, the unit attacked the NEWPORT Bridge and then was engaged at THU DUC during its withdrawal. It lost 15 men on the bridge when it was confronted by elements of a US MP Bn and an ARVN Tank Co. It lost an additional 10 men at THU DUC.

dd. 5th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 270
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 220
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (5) This unit was engaged during TET at the PHU THO Race Track in CHOLON on 31 Jan 68. It was also in action in SE SAIGON in the ARVN Dock area.

ee. 6th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 165
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE
- (5) The unit attacked the CHI HOA Prison, the PHU THO Race Track, the TRAN NHAM TOU area and TRAN HOANG QUAN area, CHOLON. The battalion had been completely dispersed with many of its members killed, wounded or captured. The entire battalion staff was captured, including the Battalion CO, the Deputy CO, a Political Officer, several company COs and one other staff member.

ff. 7th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 270

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 245
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - MCE

(5) Unit attacked CU CHI during TET and was assessed 75 casualties in the action based upon analysis of units involved and on body count. The unit was fairly effective in that action.

gg. 502d VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 200
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - MCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 125
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - NCE

(5) Unit was not identified as taking part in the TET Offensive. Pre-TET mission was to harass local friendly elements and to protect supply and infiltration lines.

hh. 504th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 400
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - CE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 300
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - CE

(5) Unit was not engaged in the TET Offensive. Its mission was one of a provincial harassing and security force. Its major job was to protect supply and infiltration lines from CAMBODIA.

ii. 512th VC LF Infantry Battalion:

- (1) Pre-TET strength - 450
- (2) Pre-TET effectiveness - FCE
- (3) Post-TET strength - 400
- (4) Post-TET effectiveness - FCE

(5) Unit was not identified as being actively engaged in the TET Offensive. Its mission was local harassment and security of supply and infiltration lines.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 2 (Special Tactics) to Annex A (Intelligence) to TET
Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (C) MISSION OF THE ARMOR OFFICE MILITARY STAFF DEPARTMENT COSVN: Captured documents reveal that during the last three months of 1967, all subordinate units of DOI 16 (Armor Office, or Mechanized Section, Military Staff Department, HQ, SVNLA) should emphasize sapper training for all new elements and mechanized units. Mechanized companies should be trained in capturing and operating mechanized vehicles, and at the same time should be able to conduct successful attacks on (enemy) mechanized vehicles. It is interesting to note that prisoners captured at the ARVN Armored Command reported that they had trained tank crews with them in the expectation of capturing and using ARVN tanks (there were no tanks at HQ ARVN Armored Command). It was also reported that on 1 Feb, the VC captured 2 or 3 APC's vicinity MY THO and escaped. It was further reported that these APC's were later recaptured.

2. (C) METHODS OF MOVING WEAPONS TO THE CAPITAL: A PW indicated that in Nov 67 the VC researched methods of camouflaging weapons shipments into the capital. Source who was ordered to conduct the research disclosed the following information:

a. Research on camouflage methods: In this time period, there were only two roads for moving weapons into SAIGON: Highways 1 and 13. The method of camouflaging had to conform to the trade carried on in the area concerned. Source proposed the following methods of camouflaging weapons being brought into the city: Highway 13 linked BEN CAT with SAIGON. Most of the trade on the route had to do with the rubber and firewood industries. Therefore, the camouflaging had to correspond to these two industries in order to avoid inspection by the authorities. Highway 1 was mainly used to transport vegetables, cabbages, egg-plants, melons, and all types of fruit. On this route the VC must disguise themselves as sellers of the above items, and rent vehicles to transport weapons into SAIGON. The problem that arose was how to pass through the check points on the highway to the city; once in the city, the vehicles were hardly even stopped. After the above proposals were submitted, source was put in charge of supplies to Highway 1. Other persons would be responsible for the further movement of supplies on that highway. Source indicates two other individuals were responsible for movement on Highway 13, but source did not know of other details concerning their route.

b. Movement of weapons into SAIGON: From Nov 67 to Jan 68, source had organized four trips as follows:

(1) First Trip: The trans-shipment point in SAIGON would be on TRAN QUI CAP Street (at the garbage point) near the Railroad Station. A Mr. NAM (NEAM) would receive the weapons. Firewood was stacked on the vehicle in such a way as to leave a vacant space (0.7m x 2.2m x 0.12m) in the center. Into this empty space were placed 30 x B-40 ATGL rounds, 6000 AK rounds, and 20 kg of TNT. After placing the ammunition in this space, source used butts of logs one cm thick to disguise both ends of the arms cache space.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

If one glanced at the end, it appeared that logs were stacked in the space. The wood was taken to Station 2 in TRANG DAU HAM where another individual came from SAIGON to take the cargo to Highway 1 by rented vehicle and continue the journey towards the destination. Other details on the trip to SAIGON were unknown.

(2) Second Trip: The second trip was organized in the beginning of Dec 67. The trans-shipment point in SAIGON was the BAN VO Market, and the receiver was BA HAI (BAL, HAI), approximately 50 years old. After she received the cargo, BA HAI would take the ammunition to CACH MANG Street, PHU NHUAN. This time, source used four baskets suspended under the vehicle to move approximately 6000 rounds of AK SMG ammunition and 40 rounds of B-40 ATGL ammunition. A layer of tomatoes were placed on top of the ammunition. Rolls containing four B-40 ATGLs were also hid under the tomatoes. Source took the ammunition and weapons to Station 2, TRANG DAU, where another individual took them to Highway 1, rented a truck and transported the cargo to SAIGON.

(3) Third Trip: On this trip, weapons and ammunition were to be sent to TRAN QUY CAP Street at the garbage point near the Railroad Station where Mr. NAM would receive them. On 28 Jan 68, source wrapped three B-40 ATGLs and approximately 200 sticks of TNT, and camouflaged them in tomatoes. Source further put approximately 30 B-40 ATGL rounds, a quantity of B-40 ATGL propellant and some fuses in the tomatoes. After completing the camouflaging, he also brought the supplies to Station 2 where an accomplice received them, took them to Highway 1, rented a truck, and transported them to SAIGON.

(4) Fourth Trip: On 29 Jan 68, source used two containers to carry eight AK SMGs, three pistols, two B-40 ATGLs, and a quantity of explosives. Source hid 20 rounds of B-40 ATGL ammunition, eight bandoliers of AK ammunition, eight magazines of SMG ammunition, and one box of explosives in between tomatoes. These supplies were taken to Station 2 and again received and transported to SAIGON by truck. When source infiltrated SAIGON he learned that these weapons had been sent to a car repair shop in DA KAO, SAIGON.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 3 (Invasion Routes) to Annex A (Intelligence) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (U) Since the beginning of the VC TET Offensive, intelligence has become available which indicates the invasion routes used by major VC/NVA units during the offensive. Information is based on all sources of intelligence.

2. (C) The major invasion routes were generally as follows:

a. The 5th VC Div Hq, 275th VC Regt, 34A Arty Regt moved astride Rte 322 through War Zone "D" to the swampy area vic YT 2831, which served as a staging and base area. These units then crossed the DONG NAI River and moved west.

b. At least one battalion of the 274th VC Regt moved north from the HAT DICH, crossed Hwy 1 vic YT 3310 on 18 Jan, then moved west. The crossing was covered by a screen of harassing attacks along the highway.

c. The 101st NVA Regiment and 1st MF Battalion crossed the SAIGON River from THANH AN to XA MOI in the vic of BEN SUC (vic XT 5834) and followed the south bank of the river to their objectives.

d. The 271st and 272d VC Regts followed the north bank of the SAIGON River from the vicinity of THANH AN, and crossed the river almost directly north of their objective.

e. The 273d VC and 141st NVA Regts followed the SONG BE, then moved to BINH MY (vic XT 9033) then east of Hwy 1A to vicinity PHU LOI.

f. The 267th and 269th LF Battalions followed an arc south of Hwy 4 and crossed it in the vicinity of BINH CHANH (XS 7279).

3. (C) For units moving to SAIGON from the north, the key area was base area 356 where they were assisted by Rear Service Group 83.

4. (U) The local force units which attacked SAIGON were apparently infiltrated into the city under the cover of the normal influx of people who entered the city for the celebration of TET. It would not be difficult since these forces amounted to approximately 4000 men a number which would scarcely be noticed in a city of approximately 2,000,000 people.

5. (U) Units which could not be infiltrated were held in assembly areas and then conducted forced marches on the evening of 31 Jan.

6. (U) The VC/NVA paid a high price for the security of their plans and approaches. Some units were not sure of their objectives, while detailed briefings were not generally conducted so that when knowledgeable individuals were killed, there was no one to assume command to carry out the mission. Units which conducted forced marches, such as the 275th VC Regiment, did not arrive at their objectives as cohesive units, but were strung out along trails, while other elements became lost. This resulted in attacks being conducted piecemeal, or not at all, and some not in conjunction with artillery preparation.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex B (US/FWMAF Troop List) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (S) listed below are the 53 US/FWMAF maneuver battalions considered for employment during the TET offensive period 31 Jan - 18 Feb 1968.

a. 1st Infantry Division:

1/2 Inf	2/18 Inf	2/28 Inf
1/28 Inf	1/4 Cav	1/16 Inf
1/18 Inf	1/26 Inf	
2/16 Inf	2/2 Inf (Mech)	

Sub Total: 10 Bns

b. 9th Infantry Division:

2/39 Inf	3/60 Inf	3/5 Cav
4/39 Inf	3/39 Inf	4/47 Inf
3/47 Inf	2/60 Inf	
2/47 Inf (Mech)	5/60 Inf (Mech)	

Sub Total: 10 Bns

c. 25th Infantry Division:

2/14 Inf	2/22 Inf (Mech)	3/4 Cav
4/9 Inf	1/27 Inf	4/23 Inf (Mech)
2/12 Inf	2/27 Inf	2/34 Armor
3/22 Inf	1/5 Inf (Mech)	

Sub Total: 11 Bns

d. 101st Airborne Division:

1/327 Inf	2/501 Inf	3/187 Inf
2/327 Inf	1/502 Inf	2/17 Cav
2/502 Inf	1/506 Inf	3/506 Inf
1/501 Inf	2/506 Inf	

Sub Total: 11 Bns

e. 199th Infantry Brigade (SEP) (LT):

2/3 Inf
3/7 Inf
4/12 Inf

Sub Total: 3 Bns

f. 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment:

1/11 Cav
2/11 Cav
3/11 Cav

Sub Total: 3 Bns

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex B (US/FWMAF Troop List) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

g. 1st Australian Task Force:

2 RAR
3 RAR
7 RAR

Sub Total: 3 Bns

h. RTAVR:

Queen's Cobras

Sub Total: 1 Bn

i. II Field Force Vietnam:

1/17 Air Cavalry Squadron

Sub Total: 1 Bn

2. (c) Grand total US/FWMAF Battalions: 53.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex C (ARVN Troop List) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. (C) Listed below are the 46 ARVN maneuver battalions considered for employment during the TET Offensive period of 30 Jan - 18 Feb 68:

a. 5th ARVN Infantry Division:

7th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
8th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
9th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
1st Cavalry Regiment	1 Bn
31st Ranger Battalion	1 Bn
Sub Total 14 Bns	

b. 18th ARVN Infantry Division:

43d Infantry Regiment (-)	3 Bns
48th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
52d Infantry Regiment (-)	3 Bns
5th Cavalry Regiment	1 Bn
52d Ranger Battalion	1 Bn
Sub Total 12 Bns	

c. 25th ARVN Infantry Division:

46th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
49th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
50th Infantry Regiment	4 Bns
10th Cavalry Regiment	1 Bn
34th & 51st Ranger Battalions	2 Bn
Sub Total 15 Bns	

d. CMD:

V Ranger Group	3 Bns
----------------	-------

2. (C) Grand total ARVN Battalions: 46

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex D (Command Precautions) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. PURPOSE: This annex presents information and documentation that describes the actions leading up to the outbreak of the TET Offensive on 30 January 1968. These command precautions were taken to warn the units within III CTZ of the threat posed by the enemy and indicated by intelligence information.

2. The attached appendices show the warning message sent by the CG II FFORCEV, the message terminating the TET truce and extracts from various journals and logs indicating the action in the final hours prior to the offensive.

3. Further details of action within the Capital Military District can be found in confidential booklet - Task Force Ware After Action Report 31 Jan - 18 Feb 1968 published by Headquarters II FFORCEV.

Appendices: 1. Warning message of CG II FFORCEV
2. Truce Termination Message
3. Extracts of Journals/Logs

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

JOINT MESSAGEFORM				SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
UNCLASSIFIED					
SPACE BELOW RESERVED FOR COMMUNICATION CENTER					
PRECEDENCE		TYPE MSG (Check)		ACCOUNTING SYMBOL	ORIG. OR REFERS TO
ACTION	FLASH	BOOK	MULTI	SINGLE	CLASSIFICATION OF REFERENCE
INFO	FLASH		M		
FROM: CG, II FFORCEV, LBN, RVN					SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
TO: II FFORCEV AIG 100					
CG, 101ST ABN DIV, BNH, RVN					
CO, 11TH ACR, LGO, RVN (REAR)					
CO, 11TH ACR, LNH, RVN					
CO, CO A, 5TH SFG, BNH, RVN					
CO, 73D AVN CO, VTU, RVN					
INFO: CG, USARV, LBN, RVN					
DSA, IV CORPS, RVN					
UNCLASSIFIED AVFBB <u>10644</u> WEYAND SENDS					
1. There are a number of positive intelligence indicators that the enemy will deliberately violate the truce by attacking friendly installations during the night of 29 Jan or the early morning hours of 30 Jan.					
2. Addressees will take action to insure maximum alert posture through the TET period. Be particularly alert for enemy deception involving use of friendly vehicles or uniforms.					
DATE 29 TIME 1040Z					
MONTH Jan YEAR 68					
SYMBOL		SIGNATURE			
AVFBB					
TYPED NAME AND TITLE (Signature, if required)		TYPED (or stamped) NAME AND TITLE			
TC Pieper, GS, Deputy G2		JOHN S. LEKSON			
PHONE 5302		Brigadier General, GS			
PAGE NR. 1		Chief of Staff			
NR. OF PAGES 1					
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION					
UNCLASSIFIED					

UNCLASSIFIED

FLASH

M

CG, II FFORCEV LBN
CG, 1ST INF DIV IKE
CG, 9TH INF DIV BCT
CG, 25TH INF DIV OCI
CG, 101ST ABN DIV BNH
CG, 199TH LT INF BDE LBN
CG, II FFORCEV ARTY LBN
COMD, 1 ATF FWD
DSA, III CORPS BNH
CO, 11TH ACR LOC NINH LGO
CO, 12TH AVN GP LBN
CO, CO A, 5TH SFGA BNH

UNCLASSIFIED AVFBC-OP 10653

SUBJECT: TET Truce

TET TRUCE TERMINATED 300945H Jan 68. Resume
normal operations.

AVFBC-OP

S. J. PARMENTIER, LTC, Ch, Op G3
PLTN 5397

MARVIN D. FULLER
Colonel, GS
ACofS, G3

STAFF DISTR:

AG
G1
G2
G4
G5
Engr
Sig
Surg
HQ Comdt
SGS
FM
IO
DEPCORDS

G3 Stayback Copy

30	0415Z
Jan	68

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 3 (Extracts of Journals/Logs) to Annex D (Pre-TET Command Precautions) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

30 January 1968

1015 hours (II FFV #28).

MACVCOG Hudson MacDonaugh
0945H TET Truce has been terminated
reporting procedures will be as normal.

CORDS, III Corps, 1st ATF,
1st Div, 9th Div, 25th Div,
101st Div, 199th Bde, 11th
ACR, 51st LRP Co, Co A, 5th
SFG & LB Post.

1245 hours (CMD HQ Log):

Order of 100% troop restricted to the area applicable to
the units and agencies subordinate to CMD and located in CMD.

1745 hours (III Corps TOC) from II FFV TOC:

A condition Red now exists at Bien Hoa
and Tan Son Nhut.

By 1930 msg disseminated to
Provinces, Regts, Cords and
DNSA.

1800 hours (CMD HQ Log):

Following order is given to the check points key truck loaded up
with a strength of one armed squad and larger entering Capital City
must be stopped, controlled, and then report to HQ, CMD for approval.

1855 hours. (CMD HQ Log):

In accordance with instruction of CG, III CTZ, CMD will contact JGS
to request permission to employ a complete strength of the 1st Abn
Bn. This Bn will be deployed as below:

- 1 Co at Chi Hoa Prison.
- 1 Co at Natl Broadcasting Station (Mil security Agency will take
responsibility).
- Bn (-) standby at Le Van Duyet Camp.

(By 2000 hrs 1st Abn Bn moving to the positions above and by 2100
hours deployment complete).

2200 hours (CMD HQ Log):

Instructions given by the COL, CO/CMD - "ALARM ORDER is disseminated to
the units and agencies." Result of the POW interrogation - "He had
mission to move from Duong Minh Chau Zone and infiltrate in Capital City
to attack TSN airbase and national broadcasting station tonight. They
might disguise themselves as ARVN and use tanks in the attacks." Alarm
order was completely disseminated at 2215 hours.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 3 (Extracts of Journals/Logs) to Annex D (Pre-TET Command Pre-Cautions) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

302330H (II FFV #69)

G2 TOC (III Corps - Anderson)

2115H, XS866948, 86th RF Bn killed 2 VC and 1 VC optr w/3 sub MG. PW stated VC plan to atk Tan Son Nhut and Radio Trans Station at Phan Dinh Phong St. tonight time unk.

310140H (II FFV #6)

199th Bde

0130H YT085136 199th LRRP sighted 80 VC with AW moving west at the double time. 0210H LRP spotted 80 - 100 VC vic YT085136, 199th moved RRF to rubber pltn west of PW camp. Aero rifle plat ready, spooky in area. Notified LBP, DNSA, III Corps, 101st Abn Div.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex E (Significant Actions) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. GENERAL: During the TET offensive many battles occurred which are highlighted in the narrative portion of this report. Many other significant actions were reported later as detailed reports were submitted as after action reports when the circumstance of events became known.

2. PURPOSE: It is the purpose of this annex to present the significant actions in brief summary form that have not been reported elsewhere in this report.

3. ACTIONS:

a. XUAN LOC - At approximately 0010 hours on 2 February, XUAN LOC came under mortar, B-40 rocket, small arms and automatic weapons fire and ground attacks. Primary targets were the 18th ARVN Division Headquarters, the 43d Regimental Headquarters, the 1/43, 2/43 and 3/43 Battalion base camps, the 2/35th Artillery (US), the 54th Artillery Group (US), the Province Headquarters, and an area near the airstrip. The US 3/5 Cavalry and the ARVN 3/5 Cavalry conducted operations, established road blocks, and patrolled throughout the town. Several fights occurred in the city. ARVN Artillery, Light Fire Teams, and a Spooky were also utilized. At first light elements of the 43d Regiment, local RF/PF units, and the National Police searched and cleared the city. At 2245 hours on 2 February the VC attacked again. Friendly forces consisting of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 43d ARVN Regiment, two companies of the 52d Ranger Battalion, the 3/5 ARVN Cavalry, the 3/133 RF Co, 3/319 RF Co, one platoon of the 3/413 RF Co, the sector I & R Platoon, elements of the Province Recon unit, C Troop of the 3/5 (US) Cavalry and elements of 2nd Battalion 35 Artillery, 54 Artillery Group.

Enemy forces identified in the battle at XUAN LOC were two companies of the D-440 Battalion, 84th Rear Service Group, members of the XUAN LOC Security Section and two squads of the XUAN LOC Village forces.

b. DINH QUAN - On 2 February at 0455 hours the VC attacked DINH QUAN village with an estimated company size force. The VC occupied all parts of the village except the District Headquarters and the Artillery position. Reinforcements from the 3/43 Regiment arrived by 1945 hours. Enemy forces were identified as the TRA CO Platoon, DINH QUAN Village Platoon and elements of the 84th Rear Service Group. By 1500 on 3 February, DINH QUAN was again under friendly control and by mid afternoon on the 5th all hamlets were secure. Route 20 was reopened from the LA NGA River to the II Corps border. Friendly units taking part in the action were 3/318 RF Co, 3/623 RF Co, three RF platoons and the 3/43 Regiment. The area was secure and enabled the 3/43 Regiment to be extracted on 6 Feb.

c. TAY NINH - TAY NINH City was suprisingly enough not attacked until after the TET offensive was well developed. The first of two attacks was initiated on 6 February with the objective of capturing TAY NINH City. The Province Senior Advisor and Province Chief had received prior intelligence that the attack was imminent, deployed the Combined Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon (CRIP), who ambushed the VC enroute to the city and prior to their deployment. Gunships supported the action inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy force which was identified as the D-16 Battalion and the J-120 Special Assault Unit.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex E (Significant Actions) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

The second attack was launched on 16 February and approached from the east. The D-14 Battalion was identified as the VC force and their attack was directed against PHU KHUONG District Headquarters (XT335580). The Province Chief on the evening of 15 February placed troops of 10th ARVN Cavalry (12 Armored Personnel Carriers) vic of PHU KHUONG and the influence was the deciding factor in defeating the attacking force. At 0110 hours 16 February the VC attacked the BEN KEO Training Center, Sector Headquarters and two RF Observation Posts. The defeat of the VC resulted in 101 VC KIA, 7 RF/PF KIA and 49 RF/PF WIA.

d. TAN AN - Two major attacks were directed against TAN AN, in Long An Province, during the TET offensive. The first began at 0300 on 10 February with heavy attacks by fire consisting of 82 MM mortar, B40 rockets, small arms and automatic weapons. This was followed up at 0340 by a ground attack. VC units were identified as the 313 Local Force Battalion and composite units made up of filler personnel from many other units who were infiltrated in to participate in this attack. The objectives were the National Police Station, the US Artillery position, RF/PF posts southwest of the city and the TAN AN bridge. The attacks was repulsed at 0530 hours and resulted in 129 (US Bn) VC KIA.

The second attack occurred on 13 February beginning at 2230 hours and ended at midnight. This attack, limited to fires, consisted of approximately 150 rounds of 82 MM mortar. There was no ground attack follow-up.

e. SONG BE - The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division was conducting security operations in SONG BE on 18 February when the city came under attack by an estimated force of 5 VC Companies. At 1030 the 1st Brigade employed B Troop 2 Squadron 17 Cavalry and B Company 1st Battalion 506 Infantry as a reaction force. This force joined the 31st ARVN Ranger Battalion in a combined operation in the City of SONG BE under OPCON of the CO 2nd Squadron 17th Cavalry.

A blocking position was established by B Troop 2/17 and B Company 1/506 Battalions and the 31st Rangers conducted a sweep driving the VC into the blocking force. This operation resulted in 67 VC KIA and was completed at 1520 hours. Another 72 VC KIA resulted from artillery, light fire teams and an additional 27 VC KIA resulted from the pursuit of B Company 1/506th Battalion.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex F (Role of Armor) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. GENERAL: During the conduct of the TET Offensive numerous situations occurred in which, through the exploitation capability of Armor, tactical situations were influenced by a relatively small force. As a result of these actions, a study on the influence of Armor was conducted in this Headquarters to examine possible changes in Armor unit stationing.

2. PURPOSE: This annex presents a variety of small actions where armor detachments influenced the action and prevented defeat of friendly forces.

3. BACKGROUND:

a. In III CTZ on 30 Jan there were 13 US Armor Battalions, 1 Australian Armor Unit equivalent, and 3 ARVN Armor Battalions. The locations as of 30 Jan are shown below:

1st Infantry Division:

1/4 Cav Phu Loi.
2/2 Inf (M) XT7761.

9th Infantry Division:

2/47 Inf (M) YS2280.
5/60 Inf (M) XS4772.
3/5 Cavalry Blackhorse.

25th Infantry Division:

2/22 Inf (M) XT4870.
1/5 Inf (M) XT3862.
3/4 Cavalry Go Dau Ha.
4/23 Inf (M) XT6523.
2/34 Armor Katum.

11th ACR:

1/11 Sqdn XT6440.
2/11 Sqdn XT6152.
3/11 Sqdn Loc Ninh.

1st ATF:

A Sqdn 3rd Cav Regt (equal to troop) vic Trang Bom.
C Sqdn 1st Armored Regt (equal to troop) Nui Dat.

ARVN:

1st Armd Cav: 1/1 Tk Co Thu Duc/Phu Cuong
2/1 APC Co Bung Cau
3/1 APC Co Phu Cuong

5th Armor Cav: 1/5 Cav Xuan Loc
2/5 Cav Tam Tan
3/5 Cav Tp YZ9897 vic Da Mai

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex F (Role of Armor) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

10th Armor Cav: 1/10 Duc Hoa
2/10 Duc Hoa
3/10 Tay Ninh

b. On the 31st these units responded to 11 different VC attacks at HO NAI, LONG BINH, BIEN HOA, PHU DONG, HONG XANH, TAN SON NHUT, PHU THO, RACE TRACK, DUC HOA, WIDOWS VILLAGE, and BEN CAT.

4. Major Armor reactions on 31 Jan:

a. The 2/47 (M) was alerted at 0335 and committed to the defense of LONG BINH by 0500. Co A swept HO NAI village, Co B secured the ammunition storage area, and Co C was sent to the relief of HQ III Corps. Trp A (-) 3/5 Cav moved from BLACKHORSE base camp at 0510 and fought a running battle down route 1 arriving at LONG BINH at 0914 and then proceeding to HQ III Corps and the PW Compound.

b. The 11th ACR, after notification, moved from their field location to LONG BINH in a 12 hour forced march. The Regt arrived at 2210, and took up positions at Widows Village, the PW compound, and III Corps HQ. With the arrival of the Regiment, serious threats to the LONG BINH/III Corps complex, were ended. The 11th ACR was involved in mopping-up action during 1-3 Feb.

c. The 3/4 Cav guided by flares dropped from the C & C ship came cross country from the Squadrons field location and then swept east fighting through the HOC MON area to repel the VC/NVA attacks at TAN SON NHUT. Troop A 1/4 Cav at the same time was fighting its way from PHU LOI to TAN SON NHUT and arrived to assist in breaking the VC/NVA assault.

d. From the south the 5/60 (M) dispatched one company to the RACE TRACK and re-positioned the Bn (-) at BINH CHAN for rapid deployment into SAIGON as required.

e. ARVN armor was able to defend with little movement as they were located at Province and District Capitals, which had proven to be key VC objectives. III Corps did reinforce the CMD with the 1/5 Cav (-) attached to the 30th Ranger Bn, and the 2/1 APC Co attached to the 38th Ranger Bn. After the defense and restoration of the Armor School at PHU DONG, the 1/1 Tank Co sent 9 tanks to assist TAN SON NHUT.

5. Armor unit responsiveness both US and ARVN proved effective in relieving 17 different cities: SAIGON, TAY NINH, BEN CAT, TAN UYEN, TRANG BOM, XUAN LOC, BA RIA, LONG BINH, BIEN HOA, THU DUC, GO VAP, TAN AN, HOC MON, TAN SON NHUT, DUC HOA, CU CHI, PHU CUONG.

6. Additional ARVN Armor assets could have been properly utilized in the defense of critical governmental agencies.

7. The failure of VC/NVA units in restricting the movement of US Armor units, one of the key missions for regimental sized VC units, contributed significantly to their defeat.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. **PURPOSE:** Throughout the TET Offensive After Action Report the role of the maneuver battalions and Cavalry Squadrons is vividly portrayed. The movements, attacks and counterattacks are easily followed throughout the conduct of the battle. The support rendered by artillery, in many cases, made the success of Infantry and Armor units possible. This annex provides a description of the activities of Artillery from the Division Artillery and Artillery Group standpoint. The rapid response of the artillery from battalions down to individual gun position, especially in the fluid uncertain time when the offensive was first initiated, resulted in a high degree of confidence by supported units. The rapid procedures for clearance to fire, rehearsed and coordinated in advance, assisted in reducing the time log from request to delivery.

2. (C) Unit After Action Reports:

a. 23d Artillery Group: In addition to the following report, actions of this unit are reported in Task Force Ware After Action Report.

(1) Special Liaison:

The Binh Duong Province headquarters and surrounding area which included many small outposts were threatened almost nightly by mortar, RPG and small arms attacks. On the early morning of 1 Feb, the provincial capital at Phu Cuong was threatened by a ground attack. A 23d Arty Gp AO was on station and in radio contact with an American advisor in the province headquarters. Since the action was in the center of the populated area, Arty could not be used and a LFT was summoned. The AO, based on guidance from the Advisor on the ground, guided the LFT to the target area, enabling the LFT to effectively suppress the attack. That night (1 Feb) 23d Arty Gp sent a Liaison Officer to Binh Duong Province Hq to work directly with the Province advisors, and coordinate Arty support for the Province as needed. A special fire and fire clearing channel was established whereby the LNO called in pre-selected targets for illumination, and defcons for provincial outposts. The LNO would obtain ARVN and political clearance and in some cases an understanding that if the target plotted in a NFZ, and fire was called, the request was in effect from the Prov Chief and thereby satisfied part of the clearance required for firing into a NFZ. At Gp Hq these targets also needed a degree of US clearance which amounted to assurance by the US ground commander assigned the area as his TAOI, that there were no US troops in that area. During this period, several hundred rounds were fired by C/1/27 Arty, contributing greatly to the province force successfully denying a takeover by VC forces. On several instances when outposts were threatened, the first round of arty illumination (precleared and on call) was enough to discourage the attacking force and cause him to break contact and flee the area. The GS mission of the 23d Arty Gp unit at Phu Loi (C/1/27 Arty) allowed it to be considerably more responsive to Province requests than 1st D/A units with DS or GSR missions. This liaison arrangement remained in effect until well after 18 Feb.

(2) INCREASED SURVEILLANCE:

23d Arty Gp provided an AO and aircraft for the Phu Loi Base Camp Counter-Mortar watch program (Eagle Watch) on a nightly basis to assist 1st D/A in being able to provide continuous observation throughout each night.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(3) LOCAL DEFENSIVE MEASURES

23d Arty Gp is responsible for the north eastern sector of the base camp perimeter. Beginning 29 Jan an officer from Headquarters, 23d Arty Gp was assigned as permanent officer of the guard. Later, 23d Arty Gp provided officers in 2 more bunkers as assistant OG's, and with communications, capability to take charge of the sector, should the command bunker be over-run or rendered incapable of controlling the sector.

To reinforce the Base Camp each night, an average of 2 M-42 Dusters from A/5/2 Arty were provided. These weapons were positioned at key locations along the bunker line and fired on targets of opportunity as appropriate. In several cases the dusters were deadlined for electrical or mechanical failures, but still had firing and traversing capabilities. In these cases the Dusters were positioned in their battery motor pool and oriented on key areas in the sector, maintaining responsiveness for fires if required.

A 105mm How from B/2/33 Arty was positioned to provide direct fire coverage (with beehive ammo) for the sector. This was provided on 27 Jan and occupied position every night for the remainder of the period. This weapon was under the control of the base camp.

A secondary bunker line for the sector was manned during hours of darkness throughout the period, and special defensive positions around the Group Headquarters were established and manned each night. Additionally, concertina wire was installed around the Group Headquarters and Headquarters Battery area.

(4) ARTILLERY MOVES

Due to the increased threat in the Saigon/Bien Hoa area, C/6/27 Arty was displaced from Loc Ninh on 9 Feb and arrived Bien Hoa on 10 Feb. On 10 Feb a platoon of 8" howitzers displaced to Di An to provide fire support for the 25th Div elements operating in the NW part of the CMD. Mission of the platoon was GSR 25th Div Arty.

On 8 Feb a platoon of 155mm towed howitzers of A/2/11 Arty was airlifted to the D/2/13 Arty position at Nha Be and attached to 2/13 Arty with a mission of GSR 2/13 Arty. Purpose was to provide additional range coverage for the AO occupied by 4/39 Inf (of TF Ware), being provided DS by D/2/13 Arty.

(5) SIGNIFICANT FIRE MISSIONS

On 7 Feb at XT811104, C/1/27 Arty fired 186 HE rds (155mm) in support of a contact for 2/8 ARVN. Surveillance from this mission was 12 VC KIA (body count), 35-40 VC KIA (possible), 36 buildings destroyed and 5 VC's became Chieu Hois when their bunker was hit. The G3 of the 5th ARVN Div sent the Battery his personal thanks and congratulations.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex C (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

On 16 Feb, C/6/27 Arty (8") fired a mission on a bunker complex, XT868030. Mission was called by an air observer from 1/7 Arty. At the end of the mission, surveillance was 6 VC KIA (body count). During the night that followed the battery continued to fire on the area with H&I fires. On the following day Infantry swept through the area and disclosed an additional 13 VC KIA by artillery during the night.

During the period 29 Jan - 18 Feb, C/1/27 Arty fired an average of over 550 rounds per day.

(6) IMPACT ON SUPPLY AND LOGISTICS.

S4 Section operated on a 24 hour basis augmenting the TOC. The enlisted personnel of the S4 Section were required to perform extra guard to man an interior perimeter, leaving the section with only 1 enlisted clerk during the day and none at night, while still trying to maintain a 24 hour capability.

Ammunition and other classes of supplies were airlifted to several of our units for a period of 8 to 10 days due to the access roads being denied by enemy activity. Air transportation was at a premium due to requirements of other units experiencing the same situation.

Logistical supply operations were very limited due to inaccessibility of roads. Therefore, in addition to the problems of delivery of ammunition, repair parts and other classes of supplies were also affected due to the amount of time required to resupply by overland transportation.

b. 54th Artillery Group:

(1) Significant events, actions, and results from 290001 Jan to 011800 Feb leading up to the attack on Xuan Loc.

(a) There were 2 US artillery firing units located in Xuan Loc during the reporting period. C Battery, 7th Bn, 9th Artillery, was located in Hqs, 2nd Bn, 35th Artillery, compound north of the 54th Artillery Group Hqs. C Battery, 1st Bn, 83rd Artillery was located in their own compound near the Xuan Loc airstrip south of the 54th Artillery Group Hqs.

(b) From 290001H to 310001H Jan, both units fired on lucrative targets. C/7/9 fired 20 rounds of 105mm on 30 camp fires. The fires were extinguished. C/1/83 fired 17 rounds of 175mm on a small base camp. The Group observer, who adjusted the artillery, reported a secondary explosion and 1 VC KIA (BC). C/1/83 also fired 43 rounds of 175mm on 8 bunkers, destroying 4 and damaging 4 with one secondary explosion.

(c) At 300945H Jan the "Tet Truce" was terminated. The information was passed on to all Group units. All units went on an alert status.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(d) From 310001H Jan to 011800H Feb, numerous intelligence reports indicated many groups, of approximately 50 VC in each group, were moving toward Xuan Loc. By 312000H intelligence indicated many villages along Hwy 1 and around Xuan Loc were controlled by the VC. Many villages and ARVN RF/PF outposts were receiving mortar, small arms, and automatic weapons fire, and ground attacks. Increased visual reconnaissance indicated old trails showed signs of recent use, increased civilian activity in and near villages and hamlets, with some of the villages abandoned. At 011500H the National Police reported many people moving into Xuan Loc. 1515H all FWMF in Xuan Loc went on red alert. Other reports indicated increased activity in and within 1500M of Xuan Loc. VC were reported in 5 locations around the Xuan Loc perimeter. C/7/9 and C/1/83 fired many missions in support of outposts under attack.

(2) The actual attack and events from 011800H to 031200H Feb.

(a) At 011805H several VC companies were reported to be advancing on Xuan Loc from different directions. (Later these enemy forces were thought to be elements of the Long Khanh Provincial Battalion, Xuan Loc Sapper Unit, and up to a battalion size force of the 84 Rear Service Group. The total estimated enemy strength was 300-500 men). Blocking fires were fired, but visual reconnaissance indicated nothing. At 020120H Hqs 2/35, C/7/9, and MACV compounds came under a small arms and mortar attack. Within 10 minutes elements all over the Xuan Loc area were under heavy mortar attack. The Counter Mortar Plan was initiated immediately. Almost all friendly elements were receiving small arms and mortar fire. As the attack continued, defensive concentrations, on call illumination, and contact missions were fired.

(b) By 020200H the intensity of the attack increased. Units in the 2/35 Compound (see IA.1.) suffered 1 KIA and 14 WIA from mortars and small arms fire. Throughout the night and next morning they received an estimated 85 60mm mortar rounds inside the compound. At 020300H the Xuan Loc Gate 2 was in danger of being overrun. C/1/83 fired devastatingly close 8" howitzer support for the 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion and their fires were credited with stopping the assault. From 020311H to 020400H the 54th Artillery Group compound was under small arms and M-79 grenade fire. The majority of this fire was directed at Post 5 on the west side of the compound. At 020335H the 2/35 compound started receiving a heavy ground assault supported by heavy automatic weapons fire. The enemy was repelled with small arms fire. Throughout this attack, the cannoneers continued to man their places. At approximately 020445H C/1/83 compound started receiving mortars and small arms fire. The Counter Mortar Plan was continued. Finally, after several attempts, at 020505H the Dustoff ship was able to land at the 2/35 compound when the attack subsided for a few minutes. 15 minutes later the 18th ARVN Div compound, across the street from the 54th Group Hqs., started receiving mortar fire again. Again the Counter Mortar Plan was fired. From 020530H to 020700H C/7/9 and C/1/83 continued to fire close support for friendly elements in contact in Xuan Loc and within 1500M of Xuan Loc. At 020700H the 2/35 compound started receiving intense small arms and heavy mortar fire as well as MACV at 0720H and the 18th ARVN Div compound at 0730H. The Counter Mortar Plan was again put into effect. At 020800H contact in the immediate Xuan Loc area was broken.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(c) Group units in the Xuan Loc area remained on a partial alert throughout the day. Intelligence reports indicated that Xuan Loc would be hit again on the night of 2 Feb. For the remainder of the daylight hours, C/1/83 and C/7/9 continued to fire support for outlying patrols, outposts, and other ground elements in contact. They also fired blocking fires, withdrawal routes, and targets of opportunity found by visual reconnaissance of aerial observers. Sniper fire was sporadic but continued throughout the day on 54th Group Hqs, C/1/83 and C/7/9 compounds.

(d) By 021500H enemy activity increased in the Xuan Loc area, in the form of sniper fire, automatic weapons fire, road blocks and reports of sighting of VC. At 0202400H all friendly elements in the Xuan Loc area were under small arms attack and the 2/35 compound and 18th ARVN Div compound were receiving mortar fire. The area along the north and northeast perimeter of Xuan Loc was under the heaviest attack, with the 2/35 compound taking the brunt of the attack. At 022249H the Counter Mortar Plan was fired. At 022255H C/7/9 fired direct fire at a mortar position and personnel 300M from their position. The automatic weapons and mortar firing ceased. At this time the VC were reported regrouping in the Catholic Church. At 022330H the Xuan Loc Gate 2 was again under attack. C/1/83 fired 35-8" rounds routing the enemy and helping the 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion to maintain control of the gate. (NOTE: 1. See attached letter of appreciation from the 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion.) Captain Nightingale and his counterpart feel that the VC were waiting on their own mortar barrage to start their attack. When C/1/83 started firing, the VC started to assault, thinking it was the start of their own barrage. The VC charged into a devastatingly accurate and timely 8" artillery barrage instead. (Results - 80 VC KIA).

(e) Starting at 030030H the 2/35 compound received 45-60 mm and 4-81mm mortars inside the compound. Within 5 minutes mortars started landing 50-100M north of the 54th Group compound. About 030100H intelligence reports indicated approximately 100 people were moving east to west toward Xuan Loc. Again the Counter Mortar Plan was fired. From 030100H to 030200H, several sightings of 100 VC were reported. Illumination was fired, but the sightings could not be confirmed. By 030200H the VC were in Xuan Loc. Illumination was fired for the airstrip, MACV compound, and Gate 2 each time the VC assaulted until 030607H. At this time, withdrawal route targets were fired. Throughout the day C/7/9 and C/1/83 continued to fire on targets of opportunity, and in support of friendly elements in contact. Again sniper fire was sporadic all day.

(3) Significant events from 031200H to 182400H Feb.

(a) On 4 Feb there was still much activity in the area and numerous reports of contact, but Xuan Loc was not attacked. C/1/83 fired its 175mm guns in support of a RF/PF outpost under heavy ground attack. Captain Mullen, the 18th ARVN Div officer on duty, reported that the rounds burst in the middle of the attacking force, killing an unknown number of VC and dispersing the remainder. The battery was firing at a range of 13 miles.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)(Cont)

(b) On 5 Feb, C/1/83 and C/7/9 fired fuze VT for friendly elements in heavy contact; the results were 18 VC KIA (BC). At 2330H a village in the vic YT4905 reported VC on the perimeter with loudspeakers ordering them to set out food. The VC said they had taken Saigon, Bien Hoa, Long Binh and Xuan Loc and would take their village if they did not obey. C/7/9 fired 10-105mm rounds with fuze VT. The loudspeakers were silenced. The RF/PF personnel said the rounds landed in the middle of the VC. All that could be seen the next morning were blood trails.

(c) On 6 Feb C/7/9 and C/1/83 supported ARVN operations with preparations and on call fire. A PF outpost reported 1 Co of VC in the area with the civilians running for protection. C/7/9 fired 12 rounds of 105mm. There was negative surveillance except that the people stopped running.

(d) On 7, 8, and 9 Feb, the VC continued to harass with occasional sniper fire, directed primarily at the 2/34 compound.

(e) On 10 Feb a message from General Weyand said that there could possibly be attacks country wide. All elements went on alert but there was no attack on Xuan Loc.

(f) During 11 and 12 Feb, the village of Binh Loc had heavy fighting inside and outside the village. C/7/9 and C/1/83 fired on infiltration routes. Some of the artillery was adjusted to within 200M of the perimeter. Blood trails were the only surveillance the next morning.

(g) From 13 to 18 Feb, the Xuan Loc area slowly returned to normal. On 14 Feb, C/7/9 fired on 5 VC in the open. They did not get out of the area, but no bodies could be counted. Assumed 5 VC KIA. For the rest of the reporting period, we continued to exploit targets to the fullest, firing on a platoon digging in, lights, enemy base camps, foot bridges, a VC platoon in the open, suspect assembly areas, and a suspect VC regiment.

(4) Facts pertinent to the Battle of Xuan Loc.

(a) The accuracy and response of the US Artillery fires were outstanding. This statement was expressed in various ways in conversations with LTC Hutchins, the Long Khanh Sector Senior Advisor, Major Scarborough, the 18th ARVN Div G3 Advisor, Major Diedecker, the 18th ARVN Div Artillery Advisor, Captain Nightingale, the 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion Senior Advisor, Thieu Ta Nguyen Hiep, the 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion Commander, and Captain Mullen, from the 18th ARVN Div TOC.

1. The accuracy can be attributed to training in the form of gunnery and firing battery tests, inspections, and OJT conducted Group wide.

2. The quick response was due to many factors.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

a. Clearance of fires was expedited. The coordination between 54th Artillery Group Hqs TOC, 18th ARVN Div TOC, 18th ARVN Div Artillery TOC, MACV, Long Khanh Sector, 2/35, C/7/9, and C/1/83 was outstanding.

b. The 54th Group Operations Center Chief (OCC) received, plotted, assigned, controlled and coordinated all the US Artillery fire missions. He, in conjunction with the 18th ARVN Div Artillery TOC, assigned the priority of fires. Missions were assigned and the observer and firing battery were married up on the proper frequency. The OCC monitored the fire missions maintaining centralized control. Double check safety procedures were used in receiving, plotting, clearing, and transmitting the missions to the firing batteries.

c. The firing units also used the double check system in processing the missions. As a result, accuracy and safety were not sacrificed for rapid response. Very close artillery support was given with no incidents and no accidents. The majority of the missions were close support missions fired while the firing batteries were under heavy mortar and small arms fire. The 8" howitzers delivered devastating fire and were instrumental in preventing the 52nd ARVN Rangers Battalion from being overrun, Gate 2 taken, and possibly the southern section of Xuan Loc from being overrun.

(b) Although the ARVN artillery provided some support, there were only 2-105mm howitzers in Xuan Loc during the attacks. The majority of the fire support was provided by the 54th Artillery Group.

(c) According to the 18th ARVN Div G2 Advisor's report and the sequence of events outlined above, the 2/35 compound, containing C/7/9, was one of the primary targets of both attacks on Xuan Loc. The devastating effect of the 105mm howitzer was known to the enemy prior to the attack and was shown to him at point blank range during the attack. Forty rounds were fired direct fire silencing enemy small arms and mortars. The following day, blood trails were located in the area. Two days later 10 VC bodies were found in the area, and a shallow grave with 6 more bodies were uncovered just outside the north perimeter of the compound.

On the morning and night of 2 Feb, C/7/9 and Hqs 2/35 received approximately 150 rounds of 60mm and 81mm mortars plus intense automatic weapons fire. C/7/9 fired over 50 missions at enemy locations, counter mortar targets, illumination, and blocking fires, often as many as 4 different missions simultaneously. The majority of these missions were fired while the battery was under intense small arms and mortar fire. As a result, one man was killed in action and 13 were wounded in action. Three (3) men were evacuated by helicopter. Two (2) gun sections had as many as 4 wounded at one time, yet continued to deliver requested fire. It was necessary to reorganize howitzer sections, reestablish wire communications to the guns, evacuate wounded, resupply ammunition and continue to deliver requested fire support. Those individuals not involved in the above, were manning the perimeter and defending it with small arms and crew served weapons. Two (2) VC were

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

killed by small arms, one while trying to cross the barbed wire on the perimeter. Despite the intense mortar and small arms fire, the perimeter was held intact. Fire discipline was effectively employed and enforced. Morale and esprit of the units remained at a high level. The howitzer sections were resupplied with ammunition despite the fact that the 3/4 tone truck that was being used received over 24 rounds of automatic weapons fire through its windshield, doors, fenders, canvas, and tires.

On the night of 4 Feb, an emergency resupply of ammunition was obtained at 2130H at the Xuan Loc airstrip by a group of 12 volunteers from C/7/9. The convoy received small arms fire going to and at the airstrip, but were able to obtain the ammunition so that the battery could continue its mission.

The close coordination between C/7/9 and Hqs 2/35 was outstanding in providing close continuous support and preventing the enemy from penetrating into Xuan Loc through their perimeter. Their actions were highly commendable.

(d) Competition between C/1/83 and C/7/9 was keen. When a fire mission was monitored on the radio by both units, the race was on to see who would be ready to fire first. The correct caliber weapon for the mission was often the deciding factor in assigning the mission. Both units acted and responded in the best tradition of the artillery.

(e) As more intelligence was received prior to and after the 2 attacks, the number of H&I fires were increased. In addition, counter mortar and counter rocket targets were often fired as H&I's.

(f) Maximum use was made of intelligence in providing targets for artillery. Because so many targets were fired at night or based on intelligence reports and therefore unobserved, it is assumed that there were many more kills by artillery than were reported. It is important to note that many of the reports of intelligence could not have been acted upon as quickly or at all without artillery.

(g) Previous lessons learned that had been put into effect before the attack:

Defensive concentrations, final protective fires, and on call illumination for 54th Artillery Group Hq's, 2/35 Compound, C/1/83 Compound, MACV Compound, Long Khanh Sector Compound, 18th ARVN Div Compound, and Blackhorse Base Camp were planned and assigned to the appropriate units.

(h) New lessons learned and now in effect:

1. Four target lists have been planned and will be put into effect in the event of an attack.

a. Preplanned assembly area targets will be fired first depending on the urgency of the attack.

b. Preplanned infiltration route targets will be fired second until more specific intelligence dictates otherwise.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

g. Preplanned on-call defensive concentrations will be fired if called for and an attack is actually initiated.

g. Preplanned exfiltration route targets will be fired as the enemy withdraws from the area.

2. A 1:25,000 scale firing chart has been set up in the 54th Group TOC with surveyed observation tower locations plotted on it. These towers are manned after dark. Spottings from these locations with azimuth and range, can be plotted to pinpoint the enemy rocket and mortar locations.

3. The 175mm guns of C/1/83 were registered with zone 1 at close range to aid in firing close-in counter mortar targets.

4. Personnel bunkers have been increased and strengthened.

5. A berm around the entire 54th Artillery Group Hq's Compound is being constructed. It will be completed as men and equipment become available.

c. 1st Infantry Division Artillery:

(1) The week preceding the TET holidays found the 1st Infantry Division Artillery positioned from Di An, north to Phu Loi, Normandy/Sicily, Lai Khe, along Thunder Road and up to Quan Loi. During this period, a distinct increase in enemy movement throughout the Division TAOI was noted. This included nightly contact north of Lai Khe at the Thunder Road NDP's. Also during this period, there was an increase in intelligence reports in the Division area which confirmed heavy enemy movement. In reaction to the increase of intelligence targets and contacts, the volume of artillery fire increased sharply.

(2) During the early morning hours of 31 January 1968, the Lai Khe and Quan Loi Base Camps came under heavy mortar, recoilless rifle, and rocket attacks. The attack at Lai Khe began at 0300 hours and continued sporadically until 1918 hours. This included nine separate attacks with a total of fifty 82mm mortar rounds, twenty-one 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, and fifty-three 122mm rockets. During this same time, Quan Loi received seventeen 60mm mortar rounds. Artillery fires were used to the maximum to attack known and suspected positions, using aerial observers to deliver intensive fires when sightings were made of the enemy launch positions.

(3) From the first attack on 31 January through 18 February, Lai Khe Base Camp suffered one hundred eighteen separate attacks which included over four hundred rounds of recoilless rifle, mortars, and rockets. During the same period, Quan Loi experienced fourteen separate attacks from eighty seven mortar and rocket rounds. On 4 February Phu Loi Base Camp received an attack of more than sixty 82mm mortar rounds. On 18 February, Phu Loi Base Camp had six separate rocket attacks which included eighty eight incoming rounds.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(4) To better meet the enemy's ground threat with resources available it was necessary to reposition batteries on a daily basis. The 8" howitzer battery moved south from Thunder V to better cover the Lai Khe area; the 155 battery at Thunder X moved north to more adequately cover convoys coming south from Loc Ninh, returning to Thunder X when the convoys had cleared; a 105 battery was moved to a field position northwest of Lai Khe to support the infantry in their search for rocket sites; a fourth Lighthorse mortar platoon was organized from resources within the unit to support infantry operations in the southern Lam Son area; a 105 battery was moved from Lai Khe south to Di An for additional support in that area. In general it may be said that artillery support shifted south in order to meet the threat of increased enemy activity between Lai Khe and Saigon.

(5) Due to the frequent attacks, aerial observers were kept in the air over one or all the base camps at all times. Sightings of rockets or mortars being fired were immediately taken under artillery fire. Also, during that period, suppressive fires were used both day and night on known and suspected launch sites and storage areas. The effectiveness of the artillery fires (and air strikes) can be seen from the fact that 43 secondary explosions occurred in the Lai Khe area and 54 explosions were observed in the Phu Loi area at the village of An My, which was apparently an ammunition cache for the 273d NVA Regiment and other units going through the area.

(6) To give an indication of the heavy artillery fires during this period, the average of daily fires was increased as follows:

<u>CALIBER</u>	<u>PRIOR TO TET OFFENSIVE</u>	<u>DURING TET OFFENSIVE</u>
105mm	2376 rounds per day	5616 rounds per day
155mm	925 rounds per day	1459 rounds per day
4.2 in	1100 rounds per day	1570 rounds per day
8 in	200 rounds per day	235 rounds per day

(7) During the TET Offensive, well over one thousand VC were killed (confirmed by actual body count) by the BIG RED ONE. Although it is impossible to delineate exactly the percentages of enemy killed by various means, one estimate is that approximately 70% of Communist losses were due to artillery and air strikes. Additionally numerous reports from POW's have indicated that their units had been hard hit by artillery, not only in actual attacks but in the movement south prior to launching the offensive. The 273d Regiment is the prime example of a regiment made ineffective by Artillery fire before it could reach its objective. Bodies uncovered by 1st Infantry units throughout this period have shown a large proportion of deaths due to artillery shell fragments.

d. 9th Infantry Division Artillery:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(1) Pre-TET Situation: Prior to mid-morning on 30 January 1968, 9th Inf Div operations had been typical as months go in Vietnam. Combat action within the 9th Div TAOR had been light and scattered. Prior to the commencement of TET 9th Inf Div units were operating as follows:

(a) 1st Brigade: Continued Operation RILEY with three maneuver battalions. 2/39 Inf continued recon in force opns in SE portion of AO Fingers. TF 4-39 Inf continued the mission of Bearcat, Binh Son and Long Thanh security, conducting day and night patrolling operations. 1st Bn, 11th Arty was assigned mission of DS 1st Brigade. A-1-11 Arty occupied FSPB Apple (vic Grid YT 28-10) in support of 3/5 ACR operations along Highway 1, between Bien Hoa and Xuan Loc, on 20 Jan 68. A-1-11 Arty remained at FSPB Apple until 1230 hours, 14 Feb 68, at which time the battery displaced to Bearcat.

(b) 2d Brigade: Continued Operation CORONADO X with two maneuver battalions and Navy TF 117. Mobile Riverine Force established positions in Giao Duc District, western Dinh Tuong province and My An District, eastern Kien Phoung province to interdict enemy lines of communication during the TET truce period. 3d Bn, 34th Arty was attached to 2d Brigade.

(c) 3d Brigade: Continued Operation ENTERPRISE with three maneuver battalions. 2d Bn, 4th Arty assigned mission of DS 3d Brigade.

(d) The RTA-VR continued operations in Nhon Trach District, with night patrolling from company bases, waterborne patrols and roadrunner operations along Highway 15.

(e) Task Force Forsyth and Funston continued the defense of the Division Base Camps at Bearcat and Dong Tam, respectively, by conducting local offensive operations.

(f) Batteries A, B, and C, 3d Bn, 34th Arty, moved to FSPB's Georgia (XS065616), Arkansas (WS915403) and Alabama (WS94355045), respectively in support of TET defensive positioning.

(g) 1st Bn, 84th Arty assigned mission of GS 9th Division. Prior to TET 2 guns from C Battery, 1st Bn, 84th Arty (155T) were located at French Fort (vic Grid XS895614) in support of 3d Brigade and Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ).

(h) C Battery, 2d Bn, 35th Arty (155 SP) was attached to 1st Bn, 84th Arty, with mission of reinforcing fires of 3d Bn, 34th Arty.

(i) Disposition of 9th Div Arty and attached units prior to TET:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Location/Name</u>	<u>Grid</u>
Div Arty HQ	Bearcat	YT172004
A-1-11 Arty	FSPB Apple	YT282100

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Location/Name</u>	<u>Grid</u>
B-1-11 Arty	Bearcat	YT161022
C-1-11 Arty	Binh Son/FSPB Grey	YS208933
A-2-4 Arty	Rach Kien	XS743698
B-2-4 Arty (2 tubes)	Ben Luc	XS630750
B-2-4 Arty (4 tubes)	Binh Phuoc	XS608552
C-2-4 Arty	Tan Tru	XS653622
D-2-4 Arty	FSPB Eagle	XS522755
A-3-34 Arty	FSPB Georgia	XS065616
B-3-34 Arty	FSPB Florida	WS987554
C-3-34 Arty	FSPB Alabama	WS94355045
A-1-84 Arty	Bearcat	YT177002
B-1-84 Arty	Dong Tam	XS411434
C-1-84 Arty (2 tubes)	French Fort	XS895614
C-1-84 Arty (2 tubes)	Tan An	XS547638
C-1-84 Arty (2 tubes)	Tan An South	XS528653
D-1-84 Arty	Long Thanh	YS136923
C-2-35 Arty	FSPB Louisiana	WS977404

(2) TET Ceasefire Truce: Following commencement of the TET ceasefire agreement, 9th Inf Div units received series of enemy contacts during the night of 29 Jan 68, to include probing actions, small arms and mortar fire across the Div TAOR with reports of more serious incidents from the Delta to the DMZ. By mid-morning 30 Jan, the TET cease-fire agreement had been terminated. This message was followed by reports of incidents and an enemy buildup in the Long Binh/Bien Hoa areas. II FFV instructed 9th Div to move a Mechanized Inf Battalion (2-47 Inf) from Bearcat north as a reaction force south of the Long Binh complex. B-1-11 Arty displaced from FSPB Brown (Grid YS210800) to Bearcat in support of offensive operations. Upon termination of TET truce MRF conducted riverine operations and interdiction of lines of communications on supply routes. They assumed intensification operations poised toward aggressive resumption within the areas of operation.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(3) 31 January 1968: In mid-morning B Company, 4-30 Inf displaced from Binh Son to Bien Hoa. Intelligence reports revealed that Long Than (village) would be attacked. As 9th Inf Div resumed an offensive posture the following arty units displaced in support of maneuver units as indicated below:

(a) D-2-4 Arty displaced from FSPB Eagle (XS522955) to Tan An, closing 1400 hours.

(b) Two guns, C-1-84th Arty displaced from Grid XS552865 to Tan An, closing 1655 hours.

(c) A-3-34 Arty displaced to FSPB Florida (WS987554). HQ, 2/4 Arty, B-2-4 Arty, C-2-4 Arty, Long Binh, French Fort and Long Thanh all reported receiving mortar rounds during the day. A-1-84 Arty and C-1-11 Arty (both located at Bearcat) fired in support of Long Thanh mortar attack.

(d) At 1630 hours, 2d Bde (and 3d Bn, 34th Arty) became OPCON to IV Corps. 2d Brigade was directed to put one company in My Tho to assist ARVN elements at that location.

Ammunition expenditures in support of 9th Div Opns follow:

Observed Fire: 66 missions, 1627 rds 105, 188 rds 155, 14 rds 8".

Unobserved Fire (H&I): 132 missions, 377 rds 105, 340 rds 155, 96 rds 8".

Spt of ARVN: 25 missions, 309 rds 105, 105 rds 155.

(4) On 1 February 1968: Missions of 9th Div Arty units follows:

(a) 1st Bn, 11th Arty: DS 1st Bde, which continued Opn RILEY with 4-39 Inf (+) continuing security of Bearcat/Binh Son/Long Thanh/Long Binh mission.

(b) 2d Bn, 4th Arty: DS 3d Bde, which continued Operation ENTERPRISE with three maneuver battalions. 3/39 Inf conducted opns and received several mortar attacks during the night at French Fort. Reaction included counter mortar artillery fire (from C-1-84 Arty) on suspected mortar positions vic XS896634 and XS896628.

(c) 3d Bn 34th Arty: Attached 2d Bde (Mobile Riverine Force). MRF continued Opn CORONADO X with two maneuver battalions and Navy TF 117. MRF conducted beach landings at Cai Be then reverted to an alert posture for possible deployment to Dong Tam. At 1200 hours, 2d Brigade began moving to Dong Tam per instructions from IV Corps. At 1515 hours the 2d Bde commenced an attack on My Tho. The 2d Bde maintained an attack posture thru the remainder of the day in My Tho, attacking from the My Tho river north along the water reservoir. 2d Bde units fought with VC/NVA forces for two days. Aided by air strikes and arty, the ground troops finally smashed the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

remnants of an estimated three VC battalions. My Tho casualty figures indicated more than 115 enemy dead, against nine US killed and 86 wounded. Support was characterized by extremely close support fires placed in the City of My Tho. 3d Bn, 34th Arty ammunition expenditures during the My Tho campaign are as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1 Feb 68	4374
2 Feb 68	2275
3 Feb 68	1509

(d) 1st Bn, 84th Arty: GS 9th Inf Div (with 2 tubes, C-1-84 Arty positioned at French Fort).

Tan Tru, French Fort and Dong Tam underwent mortar attacks. 2d Bn, 4th Arty displaced two tubes from B Battery (from Binh Phuoc) to Binh Chanh (XS720791). Also, B-2-4 Arty displaced two tubes from Binh Chanh to Ben Luc (XS6375) at 1115 hours. B and C Batteries, 3d Bn, 34th Arty displaced from XS015358 to FSPB Britton (XS088415) at 0845H and returned to Dong Tam at 1415 hours. 2d Bn, 4th Arty exceeded Battalion ASR by 300 rounds due to contact missions. C Btry, 1st Bn, 84th Arty fired an area mission (grid XS480543) at 1145 hours resulting in 4 VC KIA (BC) and 6 VC WIA. 9th Div Arty was alerted to make provisions for an advance FSE to be located at Dong Tam in support of future operations.

Ammunition expenditures in support of 9th Div Opns follow:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Missions</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1st Bn, 11th Arty	51	472
2d Bn, 4th Arty	61	2188
3d Bn, 34th Arty	66	4374
1st Bn, 84th Arty	98	798

(5) 2 February 1968: Brigade and Div Arty missions remain unchanged; however, arty displacements were made as follows:

(a) B Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Arty displaced from Bearcat to YT101019.

(b) A-3-34th Arty displaced (via airlift) from Dong Tam to FSPB Pizza (grid XS4385), closing at 1205 hours, in support of 2-39 Inf, 3-39 Inf and 2-60 Inf operations in Ben Tre. As the VC tried to flee Ben Tre thru an open field, they were obliterated by rocket, machine gun and arty fire. More than 150 enemy were killed and a variety of weapons and ammunition were captured.

(c) B Btry, 3d Bn, 34th Arty displaced Dong Tam closing at Grid XS263992.

(d) B Btry, 2d Bn, 4th Arty (2 tubes) displaced Ben Luc for Binh Phuoc.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(e) B & C Batteries, 3d Bn, 34th Arty closed FSPB Yankee (XS167402) at 1215 hours.

(f) D-2-4 Arty displaced from Tan to vic XS235497, closing approximately 1400 hours.

Ammunition Expenditures in support of 9th Div Opns follow:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Missions</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1st Bn, 11th Arty	24	238
2d Bn, 4th Arty	44	741
3d Bn, 34th Arty	29	2275
1st Bn, 84th Arty	97	1274

9th Div Arty established a forward FSE at Dong Tam in support of opns, which still remains in effect to date.

(6) 3 February 1968: Dong Tam was again attacked by mortars, at which time the Base Defense counter mortar program was fired in support. A Battery, 1st Bn, 11th Arty displaced, from grid YT101019 to Bearcat, closing at 1037 hours.

The US District Advisor, Long Thanh District reported a RF outpost under attack and requested artillery in support. D-1-84th Arty and A-1-84th Arty fired in support of ARVN outpost vic grid YS106944.

Ammunition expenditures for 3 Feb 68 follow:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Missions</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1st Bn, 11th Arty	46	525
2d Bn, 4th Arty	36	845
3d Bn, 34th Arty	27	1509
1st Bn, 84th Arty	95	962

(7) 4 February 1968: No significant change in mission assignment were noted this date. However the following displacements were made in support of operations.

(a) D-2-4 Arty departed grid XS235497, closing Dong Tam at 1445 hours. Mission assigned was GS of TF Funston and OPCON to 1st Bn, 84th Arty.

(b) B-3-34 Arty displaced FSPB Yankee (XS167403) at 1345 hours, closing FSPB Whiskey (XS046350) at 1527 hours.

C-1-11 Arty and A-1-84 Arty both fired in support of ARVN outpost under attack in Long Thanh District.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

Ammunition expenditures for 4 Feb 68 follow:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Missions</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1st Bn, 11th Arty	50	515
2d Bn, 4th Arty	53	1678
3d Bn, 34th Arty	75	4169
1st Bn, 84th Arty	78	780

(8) 5 February 1968: 2d Bn, 4th Arty exceeded Bn ASR by 700 rounds due to contact missions fired in support of maneuver units. B Btry, 3d Bn, 34th Arty displaced from FSPB Whiskey (XS046350) to FSPB Tango (XS074346) closing at 1500 hours.

Ammunition expenditures for 5 Feb 68 follow:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Nr Missions</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>
1st Bn, 11th Arty	27	351
2d Bn, 4th Arty	60	1833
3d Bn, 34th Arty	32	1909
1st Bn, 84th Arty	103	1094

(9) Defense of Long Thanh: Artillery support rendered the Long Thanh District caused the VC to abort several pre-planned large scale attacks due to the timely and accurate delivery of artillery fires from Bearcat.

Post strike analysis conducted by members of the Long Thanh district advisory team (Nr 98) indicated that the rapid fires delivered by 9th Inf Div Arty have prevented the occupation of several key outpost positions by the VC.

e. 25th Infantry Division Artillery:

(1) General: At the beginning of the TET Offensive, the bulk of the 25th Division's Artillery was located in War Zone C, participating in Operation Yellowstone. Signs of increased activity to the south of War Zone C before the TET offensive began, and a general lack of significant contact or sightings in War Zone C had indicated that Operation Yellowstone was drawing to a close. One of the principle Fire Support Bases for Yellowstone, Beau-regard at Bo Tuc, had already been closed and the units had returned to Katum. On the 28th of January, the two remaining batteries at FSB Burt, the scene of the major battle during Yellowstone, moved south with a Mech Bn over roads not previously traveled during the dry season campaign. These two

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

batteries, A-3-13 and B-2-77 were still slowly working down Route 244 with the 2-22 Mech when the brief TET truce ended at 0945 on the morning of the 30th. Except for these two units, the rest of the Division's artillery units were in good locations to smoothly make the subsequent rapid shift of forces to the southern end of the Division's TAOI.

(2) Actions During TET Campaign:

The first two units which actively participated in the actual counter-offensive were Btry C, 6-77th Arty who moved to the vicinity of Tan Son Nhut Air Base to support the 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav, and Btry C, 1-8th Arty who moved to Hoc Mon to support elements of the 2d Bde operating in that area. These moves began late in the evening of the 31st of January, and the batteries were ready to support the action which began the following day.

The tempo of artillery movement slowed somewhat between the 31st of January and the 5th of February, although the tempo of action increased. The artillery units were able to support most action in the southern TAOI from compound positions of FSB's that were occupied on the 1st of February. The units participating in Yellowstone were repositioned in an orderly fashion, and calibers were located to give maximum flexibility as the situation developed in the south.

The remaining moves were accomplished without major incidents. Even though travel by almost all roads became quite dangerous, no ambushes were attempted of batteries. One particular dangerous spot was located along the road leading south from Cu Chi. The VC had constructed reinforced concrete bunkers near Ap Cho (XT7008) no more than 1000 meters from the road. The presence of the bunkers prevented free movement of convoys between Cu Chi and Saigon. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to soften with air strikes, indirect artillery fire and assault with infantry, the answer was found in the form of 8" howitzers firing assault fire on the bunkers.

The availability of Force artillery units, to cover areas within the Division's TAOI slightly weakened by the movement of forces to the south, was a great help in retaining a proper balance of support for maneuver elements and centralized control for the Division Artillery. The movement and coverage planning which had gone into Operation Yellowstone, made the return to the south a somewhat routine action, and provided the continuous close support which the infantry required.

f. 199th Infantry Brigade (Separate) (Light) Artillery:

(1) Artillery combat operations during the period 14 January - 17 February 1967.

(a) Artillery support was provided the 199th Brigade's elements by the 2d Battalion, 40th Artillery. In order to insure extensive support, the battalion established liaison and close coordination with other artillery units within range. During the period 14 Jan to 17 Jan 1968, the 2d Battalion 40th Artillery coordinated artillery fires and supported or answered calls for fire from:

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

1. US Elements.

- a. 199th Infantry Brigade
- b. II Field Force Artillery
- c. 101st Airborne Division
- d. 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery
- e. MACV Headquarters
- f. 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery

2. Republic of Vietnam Elements.

- a. ARVN elements and Advisors at Tan Uyen
- b. Regional Force/Popular Force Units in AO Uniontown and Binh Chanh
- c. Dong Nai Sensitive Area Command
- d. III ARVN Corps Headquarters

3. Australian Task Force.

(b) Task Organization of Artillery:

A Battery, 2/40th Arty	DS	2/3 Inf
B Battery, 2/40th Arty	DS	3/7 Inf
C Battery, 2/40th Arty	DS	4/12 Inf
A Battery, 2/40th Arty	DS	3/7 Inf (9-17 Feb)
B Battery, 2/40th Arty	DS	3/7 Inf (9-17 Feb)

(c) The artillery displaced to the following positions in order to effect maximum coverage of the Brigade's areas of operations: At the beginning of this reporting period Bn Hq (-) was at YT076122; A Battery, 2/40th Artillery at YT216135; B Battery, 2/40th Artillery at XS712795; C Battery, 2/40th Artillery at YT032172.

UNIT

C Battery (-)	YT102207	Hotel	21 Jan 68	Convoy
A Battery (-)	YT102207	Hotel	24 Jan 68	Convoy
A Battery (-)	YT076122	Camp Frenzell Jones	24 Jan 68	Convoy
C Battery (-)	YT032172	Concord	24 Jan 68	Convoy
Btry (-) 1/83 OPCON	YT102207	Hotel	27 Jan 68	In Location
B Battery (-)	XS81329046	Saigon Race Track	3 Feb 68	Convoy
B Battery (-)	XS712795	Zinderneuf	4 Feb 68	Convoy
C Battery	YT079044	Turtle	7 Feb 68	Convoy
A Battery (-)	YT076122	Camp Frenzell Jones	7 Feb 68	Convoy

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

Btry (-) 1/83	Released from OPCON	Hotel	7 Feb 68	In Location
A Battery	XS796950	Ton Son Nhut	9 Feb 68	CH-47
C Battery (-)	YT076122	Camp Frenzell Jones	9 Feb 68	Convoy

(d) Utilization of Artillery.

1. Fire support of units in contact.
2. LZ Preps and supporting fires during airmobile assaults extractions.
3. Direct fire into close in enemy locations.
4. False preps of areas to confuse the enemy and add surprise to actual airmobile assaults.
5. Recon by fire for maneuver elements.
6. Defensive concentrations were integrated into mortar plans and were fired to support defensive positions.
7. H&I's, and saturations were used against known and suspected VC locations, trails, streams and other likely sources of movement.
8. High Burst, White Phosphorus, as check points for ambushes and to aid the infantry in land navigation.
9. Practice missions for training of infantry forward observers.

(e) Artillery ammunition expenditure for each operation during this reporting period was as follows:

Uniontown I (14 Jan - 02 Feb 68)

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
Support	415	6727	447	744
H&I's	1536	2020	137	0

Uniontown II (02 - 07 Feb 68)

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
Support	88	1077	32	1231
H&I's	96	90	0	0

Uniontown III (07 Feb 1968 to Present)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
Support	12	181	39	0
H&I's	316	500	50	0

Operation in AO Haverford (B Battery, 14 Jan - 17 Feb 68)

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
Support	212	6721	503	2380
H&I's	1360	1781	0	36

(f) Ammunition expended was as follows:

1. Uniontown II & III - Haverford

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
Support	727	14706	1021	4355
H&I's	3308	4491	187	36

2. The total figures for all operations conducted from 14 Jan - 17 Feb 68:

	MISSIONS	HE	WP	ILL
	4035	19197	1208	4391

(g) Enemy losses from artillery:

VC KIA (BC)	369
VC KIA (POSS)	56
VC WIA	15
Bunkers (Dest)	21
Mil Struct (Dest)	3
Sampans (Dest)	2
Mil Struct (Dam)	16
Secondary Explosions	34
Rockets/Mortars	4

(2) Analysis.

(a) The movement and positioning of the artillery was primarily dictated by the area of operations of the supported unit. Exceptions to this were Fire Support Base Hotel, YT102207, and the positioning of tubes on the Brigade Main Base, (BMB), Camp Frenzell Jones. FSPB Hotel was established to provide direct support to the supported unit and to cover infiltration and exfiltration in the northern portion of the AO. The tubes at Main Base, (BMB), were positioned for defense of the Long Binh area and AO South Uniontown.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(b) During the attack on 31 Jan and 1 Feb there were several unusual fire missions. Both C Battery and A Battery (-), at one point, were required to fire three missions simultaneously. Also, C Battery was firing a recon by fire mission at the time the enemy launched rockets on II FFORCEV Headquarters area. The observer saw the launching and shifted fire onto the area. More than fifty VC were KIA and all remaining rockets were destroyed by this mission.

(c) Target acquisition and surveillance continues to be a limiting factor. The battalion fired on every target provided by SLAR, People Sniffer, Red Haze and Agent Reports. Surveillance after firing was not possible. Another means of target acquisition employed during this period was the TPSI/25 Radar operated by the 101st Division Artillery. When the TPSI/25 acquired a target they notified the 4/12 Infantry TOC at FSPB Concord, YT032172. The artillery LNO would coordinate the 2/40th Artillery Q4 Radar to adjust mortars or artillery on the target. Surveillance was conducted the next day when possible. On one occasion blood trails and some small arms ammunition were found. The jungle growth was too dense for an adequate search. The enemy was forced to discontinue use of a normal movement route.

(d) During the attack all illumination resources were being utilized to the maximum. Spooky (Flare Ship) was not able to fill all requests and artillery illumination was utilized to an unusual degree. All batteries were firing two or three simultaneous illumination missions during the attack.

(e) Clearance of fires, both air and ground, during the attack was an extremely difficult problem. The AWCC of the Dong Nai Sensitive Area handled an unbelievable volume of clearance requests including air, ground and request for Spooky and gun ships. The crew at DNSA cleared all fires without delay or confusion even during the period their area was under heavy attack. Inexperience or shortage of qualified personnel could have been disastrous during this period because most of the enemy activity was in no fire zones and under the Bien Hoa Air Corridor. The current regulations prohibit firing in these areas without clearance even when in contact. This period also provided an opportunity to evaluate clearance procedures of the 2/40th Artillery in comparison to other units of II FFORCEV and the 101st Abn Div Artillery. The 2/40th Artillery has decentralized the clearance process. The artillery LNO of the maneuver battalion clears all fires (ARVN, Air, US Ground) within the AO of the maneuver battalion. He also coordinates the clearance with adjacent units within 1000 meters of boundaries. The clearance channel, then, is from the firing unit to the LNO to the AWCC and ARVN clearing agency. Most of II FFORCEV Artillery units employ a similar decentralized system. However, during the period of OPCON to the 101st Abn Div, the 2/40th Artillery was required to process all clearances through the Division Artillery. This requirement added one additional link to the processing channel. Also it required all data concerning the target be transmitted and retransmitted one additional time leaving more chance for error. The centralized process decreases the response time. The centralized agency was unable to handle the large volume of clearance requests during peak periods of firing. This experience points out the necessity for well defined AO's for each maneuver battalion or task force with the artillery LNO operating the clearance process from the TOC of the supported unit.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

(f) Three 105mm howitzers were positioned at Camp Frenzell-Jones during most of this period to protect the Main Base, (BMB), and Long Binh Post from ground attack. A direct fire plan with positions around the perimeter was established. Direct or indirect fire coverage of the perimeter from the primary firing positions were not possible because of the buildings, towers and rolling terrain. Each howitzer section was briefed on their direct fire location for each contingency. Direct fire procedures were employed twice during this period. The 195th ARVN Company was receiving small arms and automatic weapons fire from the densely overgrown area behind their perimeter and II FFORCEV Headquarters area vic YT075113. One howitzer of A Battery was displaced to the area and fired three White Phosphorus rounds and 20 High Explosive rounds. The enemy was still returning fire. LTC Meyer, Battalion Commander ordered a Beehive round be fired. One Beehive round was fired. Enemy fire ceased and the howitzer section returned to its primary position. An air strike was placed on the same target later in the day. The engineers cleared the dense jungle growth out a few days later and reported 18 VC KIA (BC). The other direct fire mission was employed from the primary firing position against an automatic weapons position in a tower in Ho Nai Village. The gun scored six hits on the tower and enemy firing ceased. This mission was conducted at night under illumination provided by aircraft dropping flares.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

HEADQUARTERS
52D RANGER BATTALION
ADVISORY TEAM #87
APO US FORCES 96376

SUBJECT: LETTER OF APPRECIATION

1 March 1968

TO: OFFICERS AND MEN OF "C" 1/83 Artillery

The 52d Ranger Battalion and its advisory team wishes to take this opportunity to extend its grateful thanks and appreciation to the officers and men of Battery "C", 1/83d Artillery for the tremendous support during the recent attacks on Xuan Loc, 1-4 February.

On the night of 1 February 1968, Heavyweight Charlie materially assisted the 52d Rangers in establishing a common perimeter about the Xuan Loc Airstrip with troops, material and equipment. When the Viet Cong launched their night attacks upon Gate 2, the battery, firing in direct support of the Rangers, were able to successfully demolish a determined assault. This is the first time in the Province that weapons of such large caliber have been fired so close and so effectively.

On the night of 2 February, the Viet Cong again attacked Gate 2 and the Ranger Command Post with an estimated battalion of Main Force troops. Again, Heavyweight Charlie, firing in direct support, was the primary factor in halting the charge. On this night, over 110 rounds of 8" was fired within 100 meters of the Rangers and with devastating results for the enemy. A morning sweep of the area revealed that Battery "C" could justifiably claim a probable kill of over 80 VC, and one machine gun that was observed to take a direct hit. It is the opinion of the Battalion Commander that without the extremely accurate and timely fire from Battery "C" that Gate 2 and the 1st Company CP would have been overrun.

At 1400 hours on 3 February, a Ranger escort was ambushed at Suoi Cat. Again, the Battery came to the assistance of the Rangers and successfully demolished a well-laid ambush and permitted the Rangers to withdraw without injury.

At 2300 Hours, 3 February, an estimated 2 Viet Cong companies assaulted the Ranger Basecamp. Having only 22 armed soldiers, the necessity for quick artillery fire was paramount. Again, Battery "C" responded quickly, effectively demolishing the threat.

The 52d Ranger Battalion is a proud fighting unit. One of the things it takes greatest pride in, though, is the friendship of Battery "C". There are many Rangers living today from the Battle of Suoi Long on 28 June 1967 to the recent defense of Xuan Loc that can justifiably say they owe their lives and their success to your artillery. From the Battalion Commander to the lowest private, the Rangers say "Thank you very much."

Thieu Ta Nguyen Hiep
Commander
52d Ranger Battalion

Captain Keith Nightingale
Senior Advisor
52d Ranger Battalion

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

Incl 1 to Annex G (Artillery) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U).

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive
After Action Report (U)

1. GENERAL: III CTZ is composed of 11 Provinces and 53 Districts which are to most citizens the embodiment of the national government. These governmental divisions are responsible for the implementation of all government programs. The district and province chiefs have the responsibility for protecting the civil population, for the economic development of their areas, and for disaster relief. One of the provinces, Gia Dinh, surrounds Saigon and has a large urban population. The others are, by comparison, rural provinces.

2. Civil operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) is the US agency that advises the government of Vietnam in all the programs administered by the district and provincial governments. CORDS provides advisors for the following programs: Regional and Popular Forces, National Police, Revolutionary Development Cadre, agriculture, education, public health, public administration, psychological operations, public works, Chieu Hoi, and refugees.

3. The attached appendixes evaluate the effect of the TET offensive upon the programs supervised by CORDS.

Appendixes:

1. Territorial Forces
2. Pacification and Nation Building
3. The Recovery Program

Downgraded at 3 year intervals
Declassified After 12 years
DOD DIR 5200.10 Applies

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Unclassified When Separated
from Classified Inclosures.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 1 - (Territorial Forces) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

The posture of Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF) on 31 January was more favorable than that of ARVN because most individuals live close to their places of duty and were more easily recalled when the truce was terminated. The performance of the territorial forces during and after the Tet offensive was on a par with their pre-Tet Performance. Though outgunned by the enemy, as usual, they generally responded well.

A total of 22 outposts were overrun during the period 1-12 February. A number of these were abandoned or taken relatively easily either because of infiltration of the RF/PF ranks or because of a successful, intensive propaganda campaign preceding the attack picturing the defense as hopeless. Five outposts were abandoned while not in contact after heavy fighting had occurred. While these incidents were serious, they represent only a minority picture of the response of RF/PF forces.

As of 15 February the present for duty strength of Regional and Popular Forces was 55,564, 95% of the assigned strength. This figure, however, is only 83% of the authorized strength, reflecting a continuing problem with these forces which is as serious as is the fact that they are not adequately armed.

Enemy action initially centered around Saigon followed by less intense attacks on the seats of provincial and district government. Of the 890 VC killed by RF/PF during the month of February, 455 were killed in Gia Dinh Province. With the concentration of allied forces in Gia Dinh a heavy burden fell to the territorial forces for the defense of installations in the other provinces. After the initial wave of attacks, most of the RF/PF forces were drawn in for the defense of province and district capitals and other vital installations, leaving the hamlet population generally defenseless.

During this period 63 outposts and watchtowers in III CTZ were seriously damaged or destroyed. There are over 650 outposts in the corps area. The overall performance of these forces may be seen in the following charts comparing the monthly Territorial Forces Evaluation System (TFES) summaries for January and February.

<u>Regional Forces (RF)</u>		
	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>
VC Killed by RF	170	547
RF Casualties - KIA	82	221
WIA	260	473
MIA	8	66
RF Desertions	46	259
Weapons Lost - Individual	37	208
Crew Served	0	16
Weapons Captured - Individual	197	121
Crew Served	16	25

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 1 - (Territorial Forces) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

Total Number of Small Unit Operations	10,576	6,699
Number of Contacts	311	206
Number of Night Operations	7,769	5,308
Number of Night Contacts	131	112

Popular Forces (PF)

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>
VC Killed by PF	165	299
PF Casualties - KIA	113	253
WIA	244	595
MIA	21	56
PF Desertions	114	561
Weapons Lost - Individual	88	384
Crew Served	0	26
Weapons Captured - Individual	58	136
Crew Served	45	37
Total Number of Small Unit Operations	7,031	7,339
Number of Contacts	295	178
Number of Night Operations	6,091	5,899
Number of Night Contacts	111	125

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 2 - (Pacification and Nation Building) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

The initial enemy assault was felt most severely in Gia Dinh Province with fighting continuing in the northern and western portions of the province for several days. Other enemy effort outside of Gia Dinh was directed at the centers of provincial and district government as depicted in the following chart.

<u>Province</u>	<u>Number of Districts</u>	<u>Attacks 31 Jan - 15 Feb</u>		<u>Attacks 15 - 29 Feb</u>	
		<u>Province Capital</u>	<u>District Capitals</u>	<u>Province Capital</u>	<u>District Capitals</u>
Binh Tuy	3	No	1	No	1
Long Khanh	3	Yes	2	No	0
Phouc Tuy	5	Yes	3	No	0
Bien Hoa	6	Yes	3	No	1
Binh Long	3	No	0	Yes	1
Phuoc Long	4	No	1	Yes	0
Binh Duong	6	Yes	5	No	1
Tay Ninh	4	Yes	1	No	0
Hau Nghia	4	Yes	3	No	1
<u>Long An</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	10	45	7	21	2
					8

Because of the attacks military and police forces in the provinces were pulled in to protect these centers. Revolutionary Development Cadre were withdrawn from their hamlets because of the lack of security and assigned to relief work or to military duties in the defenses. In addition the forces normally targeted against the communist infrastructure were reassigned to basic security missions. Thus the rural hamlets were left defenseless to military occupation and, by default, the only governmental presence in these hamlets was that of the enemy infrastructure who were able to operate freely without detection or harassment.

RD Cadre clearly were not a major target of the Viet Cong offensive. About fifty percent of the hamlets pacified in 1967 were occupied by the enemy and approximately ninety percent of these had an RD Team or a 5-man stay-behind group present. The VC caused little physical damage, confining their activities to propaganda and the provision of supplies, and did not single out the RD Cadre for retribution.

Approximately two-thirds of the cadre strength was on leave during the initial attacks due to a liberal application, during Tet, of the rule authorizing only half that number to take leave. The traditional yearly discontinuation of the RD program for at least a month following the Tet season has only been highlighted by the recent offensive. If security in the rural areas is not rapidly re-established, the program will probably get off to an even slower start this year. Much advisory effort was expended before the Tet offensive to avoid the slow start this year.

The National Police were one target of the offensive with three provincial national police headquarters and numerous smaller stations coming under attack in the rural provinces. The National Police encountered serious shortages of ammunition and larger weapons necessary for the defense of installations. To alleviate this situation the Public Safety Division, MACCORDS, III CTZ shipped over seven tons of emergency food rations,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 2 - (Pacification and Nation Building) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report
(U) (Cont)

weapons, and ammunition to the various police departments using existing contract and assigned military aircraft. Police casualties due to the Tet offensive were 14 killed, 30 wounded, and 2 missing in Gia Dinh, and 45 killed and 139 wounded in the remainder of III CTZ.

The initial attacks and subsequent operations during the month by friendly forces were costly in terms of civilian casualties and property damage. Industrial and commercial damage is estimated at \$20 million to machinery, equipment, and inventories; and \$8-10 million to structures. Losses due to cessation of production cannot yet be estimated. Several provinces had resultant a heavy damage of homes and the generation of large numbers of refugees. Many provinces had pre-Tet refugee populations, such as in Phuoc Long where the facilities were already overstrained, and the unprecedented increase in their numbers caused serious problems. The situation at the end of February is shown in the following chart.

<u>Province</u>	<u>Number of Homes at Least 50% Destroyed</u>	<u>Number of Refugees</u>
Gia Dinh	10,288	67,635
Hau Nghia	2,797	14,270
Binh Duong	1,655	10,036
Phuoc Long	1,218	8,162
Bien Hoa	1,362	7,644
Tay Ninh	462	2,586
Long An	535	2,539
Long Khanh	359	1,488
Phuoc Tuy	755	1,000
Binh Long	81	867
Binh Tuy	18	0

Civilian casualties due to the offensive were 597 killed and 882 wounded in Gia Dinh, and 991 killed, 3,313 wounded, and 257 missing in the remainder of III CTZ. The monthly averages during the previous quarter were 99 killed, 230 wounded, and 116 missing.

The returnee rate for February was an all time low of 107. In addition, intelligence reports of the last quarter of 1967 that the enemy would try to infiltrate Hoi Chanh ranks with agents was partially confirmed by a reported 117 redefections, only 25 of which have been confirmed, and the attacks of four outposts in Hau Nghia which were assisted by treacherous acts from within the posts. Apparently there was also some infiltration of RF/PF ranks where there was local recruitment. As a consequence many Hoi Chanh have been relieved from military assignments, particularly leadership positions, and reassigned to relief and reconstruction missions.

Security in Hau Nghia is very poor. A large amount of the enemy pre- and post-Tet activity was directed against Hau Nghia since it contains the major infiltration routes to Saigon from the Cambodian Border. The security situation in both Binh Long and Phuoc Long has been declining steadily in the last few months, and Phuoc Long felt some second wave pressure in February. The vast jungle areas of the province, its common border with Cambodia, and the lack of secure roads to any other province indicate that without the presence of large numbers of US troops, now almost completely lacking, the security situation will not soon improve.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 2 - (Pacification and Nation Building) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U) (Cont)

Sentiments of the populace have become more polarized by the attacks. For the first time in the war there is a strong feeling of involvement by the urban populations of III CTZ. On the one hand recruitment is up, there is increased clamor for enlarging the war, permission to use air and artillery against populated areas is being granted, and active support for the new draft law and for the arming of self-defense forces is emerging. In Tay Ninh Province in particular there is great interest among the Cao Dai groups in the arming of the civil population.

On the other hand there is an increased war weariness on the part of the more fainthearted, and enemy appeals for negotiations and the formation of a coalition government can be expected to have more appeal after the present activist phase has passed.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Appendix 3 - (The Recovery Program) to Annex H (Effect on Provincial Government and Programs) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

The recent offensive created over 100,000 refugees in III CTZ and disrupted communications, local governmental services, and education. In addition, the interruption of economic life created the threat of severe inflation and the worsened sanitation condition constituted an increased health hazard. To meet this situation relief committees composed of both governmental and advisory personnel were established at corps headquarters and in each province.

Effective GVN/US action in supplying needed food stocks has averted a critical shortage in this commodity and the resultant hoarding, speculation, and crippling inflation. The \$VN5,000 indemnification paid for war destruction of homes is wholly inadequate under the present conditions of inflation in construction prices, further aggravated by recent events, and this is interfering with a rapid resettlement of refugees.

Due to the lack of security and the serious dislocation of the population, the Ministry of Education has directed that the schools remain closed until 1 April. The hamlet school construction program has also been disrupted and must be re-evaluated.

At the start of the offensive only about 50% of the district and province public officials were present for duty. For about the first ten days of the month local government was largely ineffective and heavily dependent upon the US advisory effort to enact emergency measures for reconstruction. The District Intelligence and Operations Coordination Center (DIOCC) remained open and effective and became, in most cases, the liaison and command post for GVN and US/FWMAF operations. Only one DIOCC was destroyed and two damaged in the offensive. Forty-six are presently operational. The training program for village and hamlet officials has been suspended for the present time.

Although facilities were severely taxed, immediate immunization and sanitation programs were instituted in the refugee camps. There was an outbreak of plague due to the increased health hazards, the highly seasonal incidence of the disease, and the inability to implement pre-planned preventive measures due to the security situation. Eighty thousand inoculations and numerous DDT dusting operations brought the epidemic under control. There were 123 cases of plague reported during the month compared to 17 cases in February 1967.

Due to the season agricultural production showed only a small loss, but many areas will suffer a decline in production this year unless security is rapidly improved.

The Vietnamese Information Service and Psyops, MACCORDS, III CTZ sent out a minimum of 10,000 information leaflets to each province explaining the aid available and the amount of aid to be given for stated purposes to victims of the Tet offensive. Health leaflets were also dispensed. All provinces are publishing some form of daily bulletin or fact sheet. Due to the lack of security initially, and because of curfews later, virtually no community television receivers are functioning in any of the provinces.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)

1. General: This annex provides information from III Corps Advisory Group in an evaluation of RVNAF effectiveness prior to and during the TET Campaign. A summary of actions and events that occurred within III Corps Tactical Zone emphasizing RVNAF units is also included.

2. (C) Evaluation of RVNAF effectiveness prior to and during the TET Campaign.

a. Two major factors must be considered when evaluating the effectiveness of RVNAF immediately preceding and during the enemy TET offensive. The action occurred during a major holiday period which was concurrent with a "cease fire." As a result many of the units, although rated combat effective prior to the holidays, were seriously under strength when the enemy attacks started. Throughout III Corps approximately 50% of the authorized personnel were in a leave status. The lack of communications and transportation prevented the rapid return of soldiers to their parent units, upon termination of the "cease fire". Once the enemy attacks started the problem was further complicated as lines of communication were interdicted. Considering only personnel strengths, the battalions in III Corps were approximately 50% combat effective 29 January 1968. In spite of the low present for duty figures, the ARVN units performed admirably. Without exception their performance exceeded that which might have been expected under the circumstances. The attitude of both enlisted personnel and leaders was outstanding and enemy actions tended to unite the ARVN forces in a common cause; destruction of the enemy forces.

b. The strengths of ARVN units as of 10 February 1968 were:

	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>PRESENT FOR DUTY</u>
5th Division	*12,196	10,776	8,737
18th Division	*11,134	10,099	8,005
25th Division	*12,457	11,285	7,018
Rangers	<u>6,165</u>	<u>5,045</u>	<u>4,392</u>
TOTAL	41,952	37,205	28,042

*Includes attachments.

Seventy-five percent of the assigned personnel were present for duty 10 February 1968. This figure will continue to rise as lines of communications are opened and commercial transportation starts operating.

c. During the 31 Jan-18 Feb period RVNAF units displayed an aggressive attitude and although under strength obtained outstanding results. The morning of 31 January two troops of the 5th Cavalry, 1st Bn, 7th Regt, and the 5th Reconnaissance Company from the 5th Division engaged an estimated enemy battalion north of Phu Cuong. Enemy losses were 98 killed while the ARVN units had only 24 killed. During a four day battle in and around Ba Ria ARVN and RF/PF units, and one company from the 1st ATF

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

killed 302 enemy and had only 21 ARVN killed. At Xuan Loc, headquarters of the 18th Division, ARVN forces killed 66 enemy and only 15 ARVN soldiers were killed. On 9 February elements of the 2d Bn, 50th Regiment, 3d Bn, 39th Regiment (US) and RF/PF units engaged an estimated enemy battalion at Tan An. Enemy losses were 125 killed (19 by the US forces) and the RVNAF units had only 16 killed. Concurrent with these actions the battle in Saigon was being fought as well as numerous battles throughout the III Corps Zone. The Commanding General III Corps in cooperation with the Commanding General II Field Forces Vietnam planned the action to clear Saigon. Vietnamese rangers, airborne, marine and national police units immediately started an aggressive operation to clear the city while the US forces formed a circle in the outskirts of the city to prevent infiltration and exfiltration of enemy forces. As of midnight 10 February 1968, in III Corps Zone, RVNAF had killed 4,307 enemy while only 336 RVNAF personnel were killed.

d. Based on normal criteria the battalions in III Corps cannot be rated combat effective because of low personnel strengths. However, throughout the Corps all units, including the headquarters units, demonstrated great courage in the defense of their areas. Although the enemy forces entered some of the towns they did not overrun either a district, province or ARVN unit headquarters. The RVNAF units did an outstanding job and none of them can be rated non-effective from the results of enemy action.

e. Regional and Popular Forces:

(1) There are 227 RF rifle companies, various RF headquarters and support units, and 757 RF platoons assigned to III CTZ for a combined strength of 58,073 personnel. Approximately 70 percent of assigned strength were present for duty on 29 January 1968. Present for duty strength of the RF/PF units was not seriously affected by the GVN authorization for 50% TET leaves because most personnel live in the immediate vicinity of their posts and were immediately recalled to duty. During the period 29 January thru 11 February, there were a total of 74 VC initiated incidents against the RF/PF. Incidents which had significant results occurred in Ba Ria where an A & DSL company was overrun and destroyed, Tan An and Hau Nghia. The most significant RF/PF outpost attack was in Hau Nghia. Results of this attack were: 2 US Military Advisory Team (MAT) members KIA, 37 RF KIA, 10 RF WIA and 15 MIA. The attack was coordinated in detail with traitors who were members of the unit defending the outpost. The attacking force entered the outpost through the open front gate, after the wires to the claymore mines guarding the entrance had been cut. Most of the dead were found inside their bunkers, killed by grenades.

(2) As of 10 February, the following RF/PF losses have been reported: 118 KIA, 241 WIA, 99 MIA.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

(3) When it is considered that RF/PF units have usually been out-gunned by the VC during the early stages of the attacks, they have responded in a favorable manner. Except for the cited incidents, the RF/PF situation has not been significantly altered and their capabilities are relatively the same as they were prior to TET.

(4) The outlook for capabilities and effectiveness of RF/PF in the immediate future remains about the same as it has been in the past. These units are poorly trained and have uninspired leadership. Their present for duty strength which is well below that authorized and their lack of firepower, in comparison to enemy units, all contribute to their inability to accomplish their mission satisfactorily. Measures are being taken to correct this situation, however these efforts will have only an evolutionary effect and meaningful results are several years away.

f. The Vietnamese people generally displayed a favorable attitude toward the government and resentment against the Viet Cong. There was little cooperation between the Viet Cong and the average citizen. Most of the food the VC received from the populace was given out of fear of reprisal. The people seemed to realize that the Viet Cong were responsible for the hardships caused in the TET offensive, and demonstrated a greater willingness to support the government. Some of the people greatly resented the VC's deceit in using their sacred TET holiday to launch their offensive.

g. Summary:

(1) Although understrength in personnel the 46 maneuver battalions in III Corps are combat effective.

(2) There are no combat ineffective battalions in III Corps from the results of the enemy TET offensive.

(3) All maneuver battalions in III Corps had approximately 50% of their assigned personnel present for duty 29 January 1968.

(4) The ARVN units performed exceptionally well and accomplished their assigned missions.

(5) The status of the RF/PF units changed very little prior to or during the enemy TET offensive and no change is expected in their capability to continue their normal mission.

3. (C) Summary of events in III Corps Tactical Zone.

a. Events Leading up to TET Offensive.

(1) In the latter part of 1967, a VC politico/military reorganization of the area surrounding Saigon, consisting of five subregions each of which touched on Saigon and provided a corridor into the city, became evident. The new organization was believed to be designed to facilitate VC political action in the capital. Each of the corridors formed by the new subregions provided infiltration routes into the capital and also in-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

creased military pressure on the city. It was apparent that the enemy was capable of attacking Saigon with forces organic to the new subregions, reinforced with main force units from War Zone C and MR 10, an estimated 21 battalion force. Lack of contact with elements of CT 5 indicated the possibility of that division moving south from northern Phuoc Long to attack the Long Binh/Bien Hoa area.

(2) Prior to the attacks in the Long Binh - Bien Hoa - Saigon area, attacks took place on cities and key installations in I and II Corps. On 30 January Da Nang, Pleiku, Phu Bon, Darlac, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Tan Canh city came under attack. During these attacks, the enemy utilized mortars and rockets as well as ground assaults on the multi-regimental level.

(3) Because the VC were obviously using the TET Truce to gain the element of surprise and facilitate their movement to attack, President Thieu declared the truce terminated at 0945 hours on 30 January. On the evening of 30 January, the 86th RF Battalion captured a man carrying an AK-47 north-east of Saigon. The PW, through interrogation, revealed that attacks in the Saigon area were imminent. Reports also had been received that a main force reconnaissance unit was operating in UI Province, which includes the Bien Hoa - Long Binh Area.

b. ARVN Situation on 30 January 1968.

On 30 January 1968, the ARVN forces in III CTZ were deployed with the bulk of ARVN forces in and around the Capital Military District. There had been a continual shift of responsibility for area security, around Saigon and the allied base area, from US to ARVN forces. As a result of this shift most of the III Corps forces were in position around Saigon when the enemy's plan to attack the Saigon area became evident. Also those forces which could be spared from their security missions in the Province were shifted closer to the VC target area. The 3/9 Inf Bn moved from Song Be (UY180108) to Phu Van (XT8807); the 52nd Rngr Bn was moved from Ham Tan (ZS0282) to YT4609; and 1/52nd Inf Bn was moved from YS9998 to Gia Ray (YT6212) prior to the 31st of January.

Due to the TET leave program, the units in III Corps were at approximately 50% of their authorized strength of 41,952 when the truce was terminated at 0945 hrs on 30 January. The inadequate Vietnamese communications system prohibited the notification of more than a few ARVN soldiers to return to duty prior to the commencement of the VC/NVA TET offensive. At 310300 January 1968 the ARVN present for duty strength was still only 50% of authorized strength.

Enemy activities during the day of 30 January 1968 were routine with two exceptions. At 301100 Jan 68 a convoy of 25 oxcarts and 200 VC were spotted by a 25th ARVN FAC at XT290300. A light fire team and TAC AIR were called in on the convoy resulting in 40 VC KBA and 8 oxcarts destroyed with no friendly casualties. At 302115 Jan 68 the 86th RF Bn killed two and captured one VC with 3-AK47's. The PW stated that his unit was to attack Tan Son Nhut Air Base and Radio transmitter station at Phan Dinh Phung St sometime

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

during the night of 30 - 31 January. This VC confirmed earlier intelligence indicators that the VC were to launch attacks in the Saigon area. Shortly after midnight 30 January Tan Son Nhut Airbase went on red alert.

c. Actions on 31 January 1968.

At 0300 hrs on 31 January 1968, the major enemy assaults in the III CTZ began. The attacks were centered on the Saigon - Long Binh - Bien Hoa area.

In Saigon the VC conducted simultaneous rocket, mortar, or ground attacks against several installations. The American Embassy was attacked by a 19 man element from the C-10 sapper unit. Thirty to forty members of the same unit attacked the presidential palace with B-40 rockets, but none hit the building. They directed their attack from a hotel building under construction located across the street from the palace grounds. This building was quickly cordoned off by National Police, US Military Police and ARVN troops. The attackers were held under siege for two days and were all either killed or captured. Attempts were made to shell four US BOQ's (Splendid Hotel and BOQs 1, 2 and 3), but little damage was done. The Korean Embassy, Vietnamese Naval Headquarters, and Tan Son Nhut Airbase also came under fire at this time. Immediately following these initial incidents ground attacks were made on the Quan Trung Infantry Training Camp in Go Vap, XS838982. VC forces attacking Quan/Trung were dressed in ARVN and Marine uniforms. The ARVN troops at the training center and marine reinforcements succeeded in defeating the enemy attack and by the end of the day, 91 VC were killed and 57 weapons were captured. The VC succeeded in overrunning a large part of the Co Loa Camp, and by 1000 hrs they had captured twelve 105mm artillery pieces. The 4th Marine Bn moved to Co Loa, counterattacked, and by the close of the day regained control of the entire camp (including the artillery pieces). They killed over 100 VC while suffering only 7 killed and 52 wounded.

At 0320 hours the initial assault against Tan Son Nhut was conducted by the D16 Bn, 267th Bn, and one Bn of the 271st Regt. One Battalion was used for the assault to penetrate the perimeter and destroy the facilities and living quarters. The attacking forces were delayed by units of the 53d RF Bn and 2nd Service Bn with support from US gunships. At 0445 elements from 3/4 Cav (US) moved to Tan Son Nhut Airbase where their leading units ran head on into the attacking VC Bns. As a result of this action by 3/4th Cav the VC assault was halted. Within the perimeter 104 enemy bodies were found, and another 325 were found on the outside. Subsequent attacks against the airbase in the days which followed were lighter in intensity, but the total VC body count was raised to 657.

Throughout the morning, many enemy units of platoon, company and battalion size were moving through Hoc Mon and Go Vap Districts towards Tan Son Nhut and Saigon.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ L

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

At 0500 the VC overran the National Police Station in Hoc Mon, killing 1 and wounding 24 policemen. By 0900 hours several VC company size units controlled the town of Hoc Mon.

At 0930 hours the VC had overrun and occupied the Armor Command Headquarters Compound, XS838976. The 4th Marine Bn counterattacked later in the day and by 1735 hours had ejected the VC from the compound.

At 0930 hours an estimated force of 3 VC Bns attacked the JGS compound XS835945. The 2nd LF Bn and the 1st MF Bn were identified in the attack. The VC managed to gain control of a few buildings in the compound but the prompt reaction of the 8th Abn Bn hindered any further VC advance. The VC were not driven from the compound for a few days, but they were contained in those buildings they gained in their initial assault.

Several areas in Saigon particularly police stations and US military installations became targets of VC attacks. The VC gained control of Saigon racetrack XS815905 and portions of the 6th and 7th precincts in the Cholon area. Elements of the 3/7 US Inf, 199th Bde, and 33rd ARVN Rangers moved to the vicinity of the racetrack, and immediately encountered heavy VC resistance.

Heavy fighting was encountered throughout Gia Dinh and urban Go Vap. MACV HQ, Tan Son Nhut, and the American Ambassador's home received mortar fire and probing attacks. Binh Chanh subsector headquarters received a heavy ground and mortar attack. By the end of the day the VC forces were dispersed throughout many areas of Gia Dinh Province and Saigon, but they maintained effective control of only Hoc Mon District.

The VC committed 15 Bns in the Tan Son Nhut Saigon area on 31 January 1968; however, with the exception of Hoc Mon they failed to secure their objectives. The VC units engaged in the CMD were:

- 271st Regt
- 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 506th Local Force Battalions
- D-16, D-14, 267th and 269th Main Force Battalions
- 2nd Independent Battalion
- C-10 Battalion
- 58th Artillery Regiment
- 214th Hanoi Unit (Command Headquarters Company for the forces in Saigon)

Only parts of the 506th and 269th Bns and the 58th Arty Regt were in CMD.

The VC made three costly mistakes. Their estimation that the civilian population would rise up and support a general revolution was completely false. There was lack of coordination between their fire support element and assaulting units. They failed to appreciate the ability of ARVN/US to rapidly reinforce Saigon.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

In the Long Binh - Bien Hoa area, the major attacks were directed against the Long Binh complex, Bien Hoa airbase, and III Corps Headquarters. At 0300 hours coordinated mortar/122mm rocket attacks were directed against all three installations. The 275th VC Regt attacked II FFV HQ. The 274th VC Regt assaulted Bien Hoa Airbase and by 0420 hrs had penetrated the perimeter on the east end of the runway. Air Force security units halted the penetration, and when reinforced by the 57th RF Bn, succeeded in driving the enemy out. The VC stayed in contact at the air base until late in the morning and suffered heavy casualties. They suffered 134 VC KIA and 24 POW compared to 4 friendly KIA and 26 friendly WIA.

The VC 238th LF Co reinforced to a Bn size unit attacked III Corps Headquarters, but did not succeed in penetrating the perimeter. The III Corps Headquarters security detachment repulsed sporadic VC attacks on the compound throughout the day.

At approximately 2200 hours the 11th Cavalry Regiment arrived in the Long Binh - Bien Hoa area thereby eliminating any further serious VC threat to the city of Bien Hoa, Bien Hoa Airbase or III Corps HQ.

The enemy failed to secure his objectives in the Long Binh - Bien Hoa for several reasons. The enemy ground forces were scheduled to attack immediately following a heavy mortar/rocket preparation of the objectives; however, a major portion of the artillery support never arrived. Ground forces delayed their attack for over two hours before they finally attacked without the major artillery support. This delay cost them the element of surprise. The enemy underestimated the strength of the friendly reaction capability in the area. The enemy also overestimated the amount of support they would receive from the civilian population.

At 310355 Jan 68 at XT740330 the Phu Loc LF Bn, C10 LF Co, and an element from C10 Sapper Bn attacked the 8th Regiment, 2/8th Inf Bn and Ben Cat subsector from the east with 82mm mortars, B40 rockets, M79 and small arms fire. By 0429 the VC were inside the perimeter. The VC took possession of the 155mm Howitzer position but did not use the guns. They also occupied the town of Ben Cat. The VC broke contact at 0600 hrs withdrawing to the south and east. Friendly forces were supported by an army air observer, five LFTs, "Spooky", 1st Div Arty, and reaction forces from 2/8th Inf, and C Troop 1/4th Cav. The enemy suffered 47 KIA, 4 PW, and 20 weapons captured while friendly casualties were 13 ARVN KIA, 21 ARVN WIA, and 3 Advisors WIA.

At 310610 Jan 68 the 1/27th Inf Bn (US) received small arms, rifle grenades and 75mm RR Fire. At 310625 the 25th Recon Co and 2/10th Cav received small arms and RPG fire, and the MACV compound in Duc Hoa received small arms fire.

At 0640 hrs VC had entered the market place in Duc Hoa. The 2/10th Cav and 25th Recon Co moved in as a reaction force. At 0640 hrs a FAC from Tan An and a US LFT from Cu Chi arrived. At 0720 hrs the 4/49th Inf proceeded toward Duc Hoa and arrived at 0740 hrs making moderate contact.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

The 2/10th Cav, 25th Recon and 4/49th Inf pushed their counter attack and the VC broke contact and withdrew to the southwest. PWs indentified the unit as the 269th MF Bn. Results: 3 PF KIA, 13 ARVN WIA, 17 PF WIA, 15 VC KIA, 2 VC CIA, 4 B-40 and 9 weapons were captured.

In Ben Cat "Spooky" and the light fire teams kept the VC from over-running the compounds. In both Ben Cat and Duc Hoa the appearance of the Cavalry units caused the enemy to withdraw.

Many other attacks of varying intensity occurred throughout the CTZ. These attacks were primarily aimed at province, district and military unit headquarters. The locations of other VC attacks are shown by red dots on the map. None of these attacks succeeded in destroying any RVN units or overrunning any headquarters.

d. Actions on 1 February 1968.

Attacks by the VC continued throughout the III CTZ all day. The enemy made particularly heavy attacks in Phu Cuong (XT805143), Ba Ria (YS3861) and Cu Chi (XT628127), and maintained pressure on Vietnamese and US facilities in Saigon. No significant enemy actions were initiated in the Bien Hoa - Long Binh area, and US and ARVN forces began clearing operations in this area.

At 0110 hours the 7th LF Bn reinforced with elements of the 1st MF Bn launched a ground and mortar attack on the town and subsector at Cu Chi (XT630130). VC elements penetrated the MACV compound, and set fire to approximately 50% of the town, before being repulsed by local RF and PF units supported by ARVN and US artillery, Spooky and US gunships. The VC broke contact at 0500 leaving 40 dead VC in Cu Chi. At 0730 hours the 49th Regt of 25th ARVN Div, began a reconnaissance in force operation in the vicinity of Cu Chi to intercept the VC units. At 0800 hours the 2/49th Inf made contact, and was reinforced with the 3/49th Inf and 1/10th Cav. Contact was maintained until 1830 hours and resulted in 11 VC KBA, 15 VC KIA, and another possible 96 KIA, ARVN had 16 KIA and 18 WIA.

At 0430 hours 3 VC Bns and 2 LF platoons attacked the Phu Cuong Province Headquarters and the Engineer School at Phu Cuong with 81mm mortars, recoilless rifles, RPG, and automatic weapons fire. The enemy quickly penetrated the compound at the Engineer school and controlled the northern portion of the compound. They were not able to penetrate the province headquarters, but did occupy sections of the town. A reaction force of the 1/1st Cav and 2/8th Inf, 3/9th Inf, 3/1st Cav, and 5th Recon Co drove the enemy out of the Phu Cuong. At 1100 hours Phu Cuong was secured with the following results: Enemy - 123 KIA, 11 CIA and 29 weapons CIA. Friendly - 25 ARVN KIA, 46 ARVN WIA, 10 ARVN MIA, 1 US Adv KIA, 4 US Adv WIA and 2 NP KIA.

At 010455 Feb a VC force of approximately 160 men from C41 Co and C5 Co D445 Bn attacked the RF A and L Company at YS383620. Heavy contact continued throughout the night, but the A and L Company supported by local artillery kept the VC outside their compound.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

At 0500 approximately 140 VC from C2 Co, D445 Bn and C610 Ba Ria Town unit attacked JUSPAO, PRU Hq, MSS Adv Hq, MP station and Vietnamese Information Service in the town of Ba Ria (YS378608). One VC platoon occupied the Province hospital, Catholic Church and the town theater. All of these facilities are astride Hwys 15 and 23 in the center of town.

Also at 0500 C3 and C4 Cos from D445 Bn assaulted the bridge at YS375609. The local RF/PF forces supported by artillery and mortars halted the VC assault, but the VC remained in contact until daylight.

At 0700 the C1 Co, D445 Bn assaulted and captured the air strip adjacent to Van Kiep National Training Center (YS402608). At 0730 the 11th Abn Bn, which was in training at Van Kiep, counterattacked and swept the area north and east of the airstrip. By 0900 elements of the 4/48th Inf Bn moved cross country from Long Dien into blocking positions east of the air strip. 4/48th Bn had moved to Long Dien from Dat Do by truck. At the same time the 910 RF Co took up blocking position to the south, concurrently securing the Chieu Hoi village at YS402601. At 1030 the VC broke contact with 11th Abn Bn and the 11th returned to secure Van Kiep. The 4/48th Inf then swept the east and north of Ba Ria and had continuous contact throughout the remainder of the day. At dark the 4/48th returned to secure its RD area in Dat Do.

At 010830 A/3rd RAR, with 9 armored personnel carriers attacked, entered Ba Ria from the north using Hwy 2. They immediately penetrated to the center of town and proceeded to clear out the VC from the church, JUSPAO, hospital, VIS, PRU Hq and theater area. As soon as Hwy 23/15 was clear in town, the A/3 company proceeded to the bridge and the A and L Company to conduct re-supply operations. As a result of the contact during the night RF/PF units and the training center were critically low on ammunition.

At 0945 hours elements of the 3/52nd Gia Ray Inf were airlifted to a landing zone west of Ba Ria. By 1230 all 3/52nd Inf units were on the ground, and at 1300 hours commenced to sweep east to Ba Ria having continuous contact on the way. At 1300 elements of the 52nd Rngr Bn landed at Van Kiep Air Strip and swept west into the town.

The 52nd Inf, 52nd Ranger Bn and the elements of the JTF secured sector Hq, the town market, and the bridge at YS375609 for the night. The VC had been driven out of the PRU Hq, VIS Hq, MSS Adv Hq, NP Hq and the hospital during the day, but some VC still remained in the theater and other buildings in the south of town. The VC companies which had attacked the A & L Company were still in contact on the northwest side of town.

In the attacks on Cu Chi, Phu Cuong and Ba Ria the VC failed to gain their objectives because of the initial determined defense of local defenders and supporting air and artillery. They were deprived of expanding their gains in Phu Cuong and Ba Ria by the rapid insertion of reaction forces. The forces which attacked Cu Chi were punished as a result of the prompt reconnaissance in force mission conducted by the 49th Regiment.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to T&T Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

In Saigon during the night and early morning hours of 30 January and 1 Feb the VC initiated ground attacks with mortar or recoilless rifle fire support against several outposts in Binh Chanh District. They struck at the Binh Dien Bridge (XS751832) on Highway 4, three RF/PF outposts, and a base camp of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade (US). Highway 4 was cratered in two places: one location was 1.5 kilometers north of Binh Chanh; and the other was 2 kilometers north of the Binh Dien Bridge (XS751832) (the road was not completely destroyed and traffic was able to pass). At 0645, Tan Son Nhut Airbase received heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire along the eastern perimeter but enemy troops were routed with the support of helicopter gunships. As intensified fighting continued within Saigon and Gia Dinh the 30th Ranger Battalion moved to the city from Thu Duc District, while a reinforced battalion from the 1st Infantry Division entered that district. The Administrative and Direct Support Logistical Company, which supports all RF/PF units in Gia Dinh Province, was attacked at 1100 hours but the VC failed to gain access to the compound. Heavy fighting continued in Hoc Mon and Go Vap where the Thanh My Tay outpost (XS873935) was overrun and the VC took control in two hamlets of the village. An ARVN Marine task force operating in Go Vap secured Thong Tay Hoi village (XS822979) and the area around the artillery and armor headquarters compounds. During the sweep in this location they captured nine prisoners, two of whom were reported as NVA officers. Action in the southern parts of Saigon city was centered around the Cholon area where the COFAT compound received small arms fire; the 593rd Signal Company came under mortar attack; and a small band of VC snipers were surrounded in the Technical School next to the Free World Military Assistance Forces Headquarters (XS836909). ARVN Rangers and US 199th Light Infantry Brigade units reported heavy contact throughout the city. At 1815 hours, Hoc Mon District Headquarters came under another mortar attack as the VC continued to maintain control of the downtown area. Information received during the afternoon revealed that the VC intended to blow the large power plant and water treatment works in Thu Duc along the Bien Hoa highway. A company from the 1st Infantry Division (US) was quickly dispatched to these areas and secured both installations at 1925 hours. During the night the VC launched attacks against the 519th Military Intelligence S-4 compound in Go Vap using automatic weapons, hand grenades, and B-40 rockets but were repulsed after heavy fighting. The 1st Marine Battalion in Go Vap and E Company of the 3/7th Inf (US) in Saigon came in contact at 2300 hours with several VC platoons.

e. Actions During 2-5 February 1968:

On 2 February the VC continued to launch attacks throughout the III CTZ. The most significant actions occurred in Saigon, and the 33d DTA.

In Saigon at 0055 hours, the VC attacked the Nguyen Can Tho and Pham Van Chi Police stations in the 6th Precinct South West of Saigon as well as the precinct headquarters and the Phu Lam police check point. The large Newport bridge (XS873980) on the Bien Hoa Highway linking Saigon and Thu Duc came under attack at 0100 hours on the eastern side. VC units overran the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

bunkers in that location but relief elements from the 720 MP Battalion (US) and the 30th Ranger Battalion (ARVN) with supporting gunships moved across the bridge and secured it by 0250 hours with no damage caused to the structure. During these hours the VC were quite active in conducting mortar and rocket attacks against the 3rd Marine Battalion (ARVN) outpost at Vinh Loc and the US Mobile Advisory Team location, both in Tan Binh District. A bridge site being secured by US 25th Division troops in Hoc Mon was also attacked by RPG-2 rockets but no damage was caused. At 0440 hours, the Thu Duc District Headquarters was heavily attacked by the 272nd Regt employing B-40 rockets and mortars. The National Police Station was also attacked by elements of this force. A prisoner captured later in the morning revealed that NVA troops were being used in VC units as filler personnel.

Throughout the day there were many reports and sightings of VC units moving, or attempting to mass, but they were constantly harassed by air and artillery strikes, helicopter gunships and by US-GVN units which reacted quickly to intelligence information and were now conducting sweep operations in suspected VC locations. The 2/327th of the 101st Airborne Division (US) arrived in Tan Son Nhut at 1230 hours and was deployed in eastern Binh Chanh District. ARVN Marine, Airborne, Ranger and 199th Light Infantry Brigade (US) units were conducting search and sweep operations in the city of Saigon and clearing pockets of resistance. The major VC attempt to capture the city appeared to be spent as the impetus of the enemy offensive had been broken. VC forces still had the capability to initiate attacks against individual installations but not with the magnitude of the first two days. Large numbers of VC were still resisting in the Cholon area of Saigon. The light defense force at the Cau Dua bridge in Hoc Mon was heavily attacked and overrun at 1500 hours. Many reports indicated that VC units were becoming disorganized and disoriented in Saigon as they were losing coordination and control from parent units and were attempting to extract themselves from the city. During the night, helicopter gunships, aircraft, and river patrol boats raked suspected or known crossing points from Go Vap into Thu Duc. Twenty sampans were spotted along the Saigon river in Go Vap which were engaged by aircraft firing rockets and mini-guns and all vessels were sunk with secondary explosions occurring.

On 3 February at 0410 hours the Thu Duc District Headquarters was hit by a heavy ground attack by an estimated force of two VC battalions with automatic weapons, B-40 rockets, machine guns and mortars. District forces had been reinforced by elements of a US company and three PF platoons which repulsed the attack with the help of mini-gun firing aircraft, gunships and flareships. Forty VC bodies were found in the morning but PW accounts estimate that eighty-five were killed during the two attempts on this headquarters. A large number of civilian homes were destroyed (approximately 75) by VC fire and thirty-eight civilians killed. The 2nd Marine Battalion (ARVN) compound in Thu Duc was attacked at 0650 hours by VC firing small arms and machine guns. Although casualties were light, extensive damage was caused to living facilities where 59 units were destroyed. Highway 4 through Binh Chanh was again cratered in two places during the night, but the road remained passable.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

The VC took control of a school in Tan Phu at 2240 hours but a PF platoon regained the area at 2359.

At 2250 hours the 30th Fuel Depot was attacked in Go Vap but sustained little damage. Hoc Mon District headquarters was attacked at 2345 hours by a VC platoon and at the same time the MAT team in Hoc Mon was heavily hit by a VC force which fired approximately 75 B-40 rockets at the compound, causing considerable damage to the defenses, killing one PF soldier, wounding six others and inflicting minor wounds on three US team personnel. The Tan Kiem outpost of the 55th RF Battalion received a mortar attack during the night which was quickly disengaged when friendly artillery was fired in support. Binh Chanh District Headquarters came under a ground, rocket and 75mm recoilless rifle attack at midnight in conjunction with simultaneous attacks on the Binh Dien Bridge and the Tan Qui Tay RF/PF (XS741805) outpost in that district. Light to moderate damage was caused in the district compound and the VC were repulsed after reaching the outer defenses.

As a result of shifting forces from within III CTZ, and the movement of the National Reserve from other Corps areas, the forces in Saigon on 3 February were as follows:

1. Ranger - 30th, 33rd, 38th, 35th and 41st Bns.
2. Marine - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 6th Bns.
3. Airborne - 1st, 3rd, 6th, 8th and 11th Bns.
4. RF - 3 Bns and 24 Cos.
5. PF - 159 Plats.
6. National Police - 20,000 - 25,000.
7. Military Police - 2 Bns.
8. Security Police - 1 Bn.
9. ARVN Artillery - 1 Bn.
10. US forces - 6 Inf Bns, 1 Inf (M) Bn and 6 Arty Btrys.

All friendly units continued to conduct search and sweep operation through out the day in their areas of interest as small VC forces were being caught and destroyed.

At 0320 hours on 4 February, the Thu Duc Infantry School was subjected to a minor ground attack which did not cause damage or casualties. Later that morning, the VC overran two small squad size outposts in Thu Duc. The PF troops escaped and artillery was fired on these locations to destroy them and deny their use to the enemy. Operations continued throughout the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

Province and Saigon, where heavy fighting was still being encountered in Cholon and around the race track area. One battalion from the 9th Infantry Division moved into Nha Be District with a supporting artillery battery and was assigned an area of operation which covered the entire district. At midnight another attack was directed at Binh Chanh District Headquarters by VC ground elements using mortars and recoilless rifle fire which killed 2 RF soldiers and 2 civilians and wounded 4 RFs and 10 civilians.

In the morning of 5 February, Thu Duc and Hoc Mon District Headquarters had light contacts and received harassing sniper fire. The 5/60th Inf (Mech), 9th Division (US) had contact in Binh Chanh which lasted for seven hours through the night and early morning. One APC was destroyed and one damaged with 2 US KIA and 8 WIA. Heavy contacts were experienced by other US units in Hoc Mon and Binh Chanh where 3/7 Battalion, 199th Light Infantry Brigade had an air mobile operation land in the midst of a VC force. Seven helicopters were damaged and forced down but all were later extracted. US casualties were: 2 KIA, 12 WIA, while 43 VC were killed and 2 were captured, along with 12 weapons. Another contact with a VC company in Binh Chanh, conducted by 2/327 Airborne, resulted in 16 VC KIA and 1 heavy machine gun, 2 light machine guns and 2 82mm mortars captured.

During the night, VC attacks were mounted against several RF/PF outposts although no significant damage was caused. VC held large areas in the 6th Precinct of Saigon and blew the power plant in the 5th Precinct which caused a partial power failure in that area of the city. Heavy fighting occurred in the 8th Precinct between VC and ARVN Rangers units and many VC were still holding out in the Cholon area. An attack upon a PF outpost in Binh Chanh where US Airborne elements were being housed caused many casualties to both US and Vietnamese. Eleven US were KIA and 6 WIA, 2 PF KIA, 10 WIA, 5 civilians wounded and 2 RD cadre killed. VC losses amounted to 17 KIA (BC) and 6 weapons captured. The enemy unit was reported as NVA, and after this action moved toward the 7th Precinct of Saigon.

It was clear by 5 February that the major VC units in Saigon were dispersed or disorganized, however, the quantity of VC personnel scattered throughout still prevented the transition back to normal in the city. In order to provide a unified command within the city, and to take best advantage of the firepower and flexibility of US forces, a major change in responsibility was planned. JGS would command the clearing operations within the city, giving the Ranger, Airborne and Marine commands, and the National Police each a section of the city to clear. The US forces would be withdrawn to the perimeter to block the escape of VC within the city and to prevent reinforcement from without. In the 33d DTA the battle for Ba Ria continued, and a major VC attack was launched on the 18th Div Hq and Long Khanh Province Hq at Xuan Loc.

The D440 Bn supported by local guerrillas and elements of the 84th Rear Services Detachment launched a ground and mortar attack on Xuan Loc at 0130 hours. One enemy company penetrated the town of Xuan Loc on the west and

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

pushed in as far as the market place. One AC trp with an attached tank platoon from 1st Cav (ARVN) and C troop 3/5 Cav (US) were quickly committed to the market place. The ARVN/US Cav reaction force came from the east of Xuan Loc along the main east-west road in Xuan Loc and received light enemy small arms and rocket fire from both sides of the road. These units did not allow the harassing forces along the road to slow down or stop them. They moved directly to the market place putting fire along both sides of the main road as they went. Immediately upon reaching the market place they gained contact with the VC, stopped the penetration, and destroyed the VC company. The VC withdrew to houses and the Catholic Church on the western edge of town. The VC lost 74 killed and 5 captured at the market place. This rapid aggressive counterattack by the Cav ended any serious VC threat to Xuan Loc. After this counter attack the VC had only scattered individuals on the western edge, and along the east-west road in town.

The 1/43d Inf conducted recon in force operations starting at daylight on 3 Feb. Most of the remaining VC were eliminated; however, at nightfall there were still some snipers left in town. At 032240 Feb Xuan Loc received mortar, rocket, small arms and automatic weapons fire along the north and east of the perimeter. At 040230 Feb the VC conducted a ground attack on the MACV compound airfield and 18 Div Headquarters. "Spooky" and light fire teams supported and no penetrations were made. VC broke contact at approximately 040400 Feb. This was the last significant contact in Xuan Loc. The two Battalions of the 43d Inf conducted search and clear operation inside and outside of Xuan Loc during the day of 4 Feb. Most of the remaining snipers were eliminated; however, isolated sniper fire occurred until 7 Feb. The total results of the Xuan Loc battle are as follows: 66 VC killed by ARVN, 45 VC killed by US and 5 VC captured. 15 ARVN KIA, 2 US KIA, 27 ARVN WIA, 19 US WIA, 2 Civ KIA and 113 Civ WIA.

West of Ba Ria at 020205 Feb the VCC25 Long Dat Concentration Company, with an estimated strength of 100, launched an attack on Long Dien YS431596. The VC used rockets mortars, small arms and automatic weapons fire and a ground assault on the NP HQ, VIS HQ, and the District Hq Compound. The local RF/PF forces repulsed the attack and the VC withdrew to fortified positions along the southern edge of Long Dien vicinity of YS430591. They maintained some troops in this position until driven out on 10 Jan 68.

With daylight on 2 February the 52 Rngr Bn, 3/52 Inf Bn and RAR conducted search and clear operations in Ba Ria. The 4/48 conducted search and clear operations in its TAOR in the vicinity of Dat Do. In Ba Ria TAC air and light fire teams were used to assist in clearing the VC out of the theater and southern part of town, and the VC units in the north western part of town in the vicinity of the A & L Co. These search and clear operations eliminated the VC threat to Ba Ria. 206 VC were killed and 61 weapons found in town, and in the vicinity of the A & L Co. At the Van Kiep training center 52 VC were killed, 2 VC and 53 weapons were captured.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

On the night of 2/3 Feb the action shifted from Ba Ria to Long Dien. At 030300 Feb the VC launched a ground and mortar attack against the district headquarters in Long Dien. The VC were not able to penetrate the district headquarters but they did remain in town until daylight. No "Spooky" or light fire teams were available to support Long Dien.

In the morning of 3 Feb the 3/25 Inf Bn moved out of Ba Ria to the east and swung south to Long Dien. By 1130 hours the 3/52 had contact with 2 VC platoons in the town at YS425596. The contact continued into the afternoon without significant gains. At dark the 2/52 Inf withdrew to north of town where it was joined by A/3 RAR.

On 4 Feb the 2/52 Inf moved south into Long Dien and swung east along Hwy 23 while A/3 RAR moved south along the western edge of town with no contact. The 52d Inf met light opposition but cleared the main part of town. 52d Inf and A/3 RAR remained in Long Dien for the night. The 52 Rngr Bn conducted search and clear operations east of Ba Ria. They had light contact vicinity of YS393403, but the VC quickly broke contact and withdrew to the south. After this there was no further activity in the Ba Ria Area. During this period an additional 44 VC bodies were found and 4 more VC were captured.

At 020210 Feb an unknown number of VC from the 506 LF Bn attacked Bao Trai with 82mm mortar and RPG fire. "Spooky" supported along with ARVN and US artillery. The VC broke contact at 020615 and withdrew in an unknown direction. The enemy mortar and RPG fire hit the National Police detainees compound, killed 5 detainees and wounded 32; 1 ARVN was killed and 7 wounded; and 3 civilians were wounded. Enemy losses are unknown.

020815 Feb Dinh Quan SS reported contact with an unknown VC force at YT570375. The VC used 60 and 82mm mortars, small arms and automatic weapons in this attack. At 02110 Feb VC were reported in control of the village at Dinh Quan and the situation was reported critical because an estimated VC Bn was reported in the village. At 1940 one company of 3/43 Inf was moved by air from Phu Hoi YS0888 to Dinh Quan XS568377. This company made contact with an estimated Bn sized force immediately after landing. At 030610 the fighting continued in the streets, but the VC finally broke contact at 030945. The results were 8 RF/PF KIA, 5 Civ KIA, 1 RD Cadre KIA, 12 weapons lost, and the VC losses unknown. The enemy force consisted of 1 guerrilla plt from Long An and 1 guerrilla plt from Dinh Quan. These guerrillas, by their aggressive attitude and deception, were able to keep the local forces contained in their compound for two days.

With the VC offensive halted, the emphasis was shifted from reacting to VC threats to the elimination of the VC in Saigon and in the vicinity of the Province and District Capitals.

In Saigon the JGS put into action the plans using Marines, Rangers, Airborne troops and National Police to ferret out the VC within the city. Each of these forces was given a sector of responsibility within Saigon and was ordered to thoroughly search and clear these sectors. The US forces moved to an outer ring around Saigon and cut off VC entry and exit to the city.

UNCLASSIFIED

Annex I (III Corps Advisory Group) to TET Offensive After Action Report (U)
(Cont)

In the Division Tactical Areas search and clear operations were initiated in the areas surrounding the province, district and tactical unit headquarters.

Efforts were made by ARVN and RF/PF commanders to get their soldiers who were cut off at home while on TET leave back to their units. ARVN strength in the battalions was up to 75% of the authorized strength by 10 February.

For the most part the VC avoided contact; however, they continued to conduct harassing mortar and rocket attacks throughout the Corps area. They did launch unsuccessful ground attacks on Tan An, Tay Ninh and Long Be.

At 100255 Tan An Sector Hq received a heavy mortar and ground attack from the K-3 Bn, Dong Nai Regt. The local RF/PF forces supported by "Spooky" and a light fire team from 9th US Div halted the VC attack, and caused the VC heavy casualties. 103 VC were killed and this does not include 19 VC killed by 9th Div troops, 22 VC captured, and 24 weapons were captured. 3 RF, 8 MP and 1 ARVN were killed and 11 RF were wounded. As a result of the indiscriminate VC mortar attack 25 Civ were killed and 125 wounded. In this action the combination of the determined RF/PF defenders, and the high volume of accurate fire delivered by Spooky and the light fire teams.

At 180055 elements of the 211 and 212 Bns conducted a ground and mortar attack on Song Be (YU181080). Enemy forces penetrated the town as far as the market place by 0200 hrs. Two companies of the 31st Rngr Bn maintained contact with the VC forces in the town throughout the night. The VC withdrew from the city at daylight leaving a harassing force of 100 men behind. The Main VC force went to a location west of the city. A joint force of 2/17 US Cav and 31st Rangers gained and maintained contact with the VC west of town all day 18 Feb. LFT, FAC and TAC air supported these contacts. The VC withdrew in an unknown direction at 1930 hours. Results: 6 ARVN KIA, 1 US KIA, 31 ARVN WIA, 1 US WIA, 106 VC KIA, 13 VC PW and 52 VC weapons captured.

LIBRARY
ARMED FORCES STAFF COLLEGE

UNCLASSIFIED

REINFORCEMENT OF CMD
LINE BNS IN CMD AS OF 2400

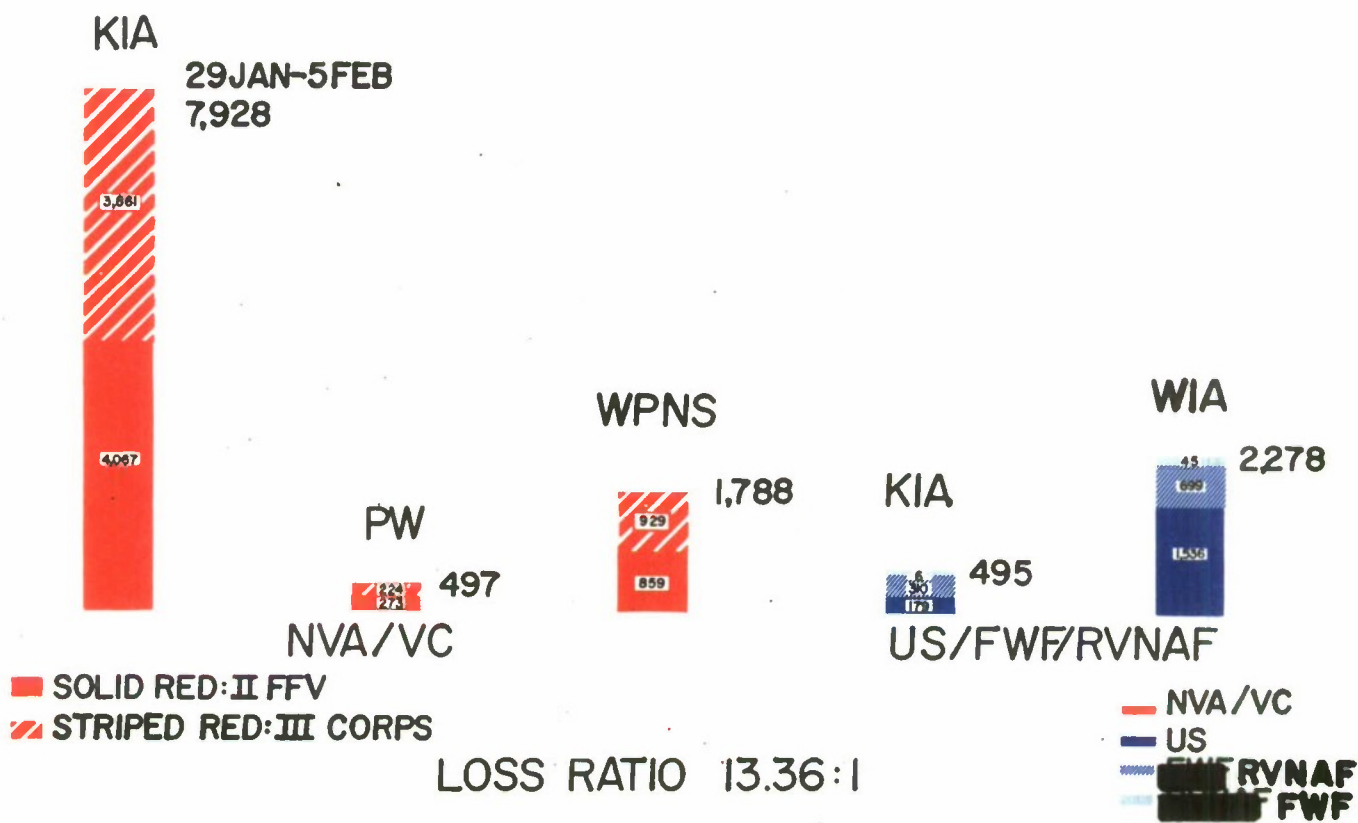
	<u>29 JAN</u>	<u>30 JAN</u>	<u>31 JAN*</u>	<u>3 FEB</u>	<u>5 FEB</u>
ARVN	5	6	8	15	16
US	1	1	5	7	5
	6	7	13	22	21

* DAY OF ATK

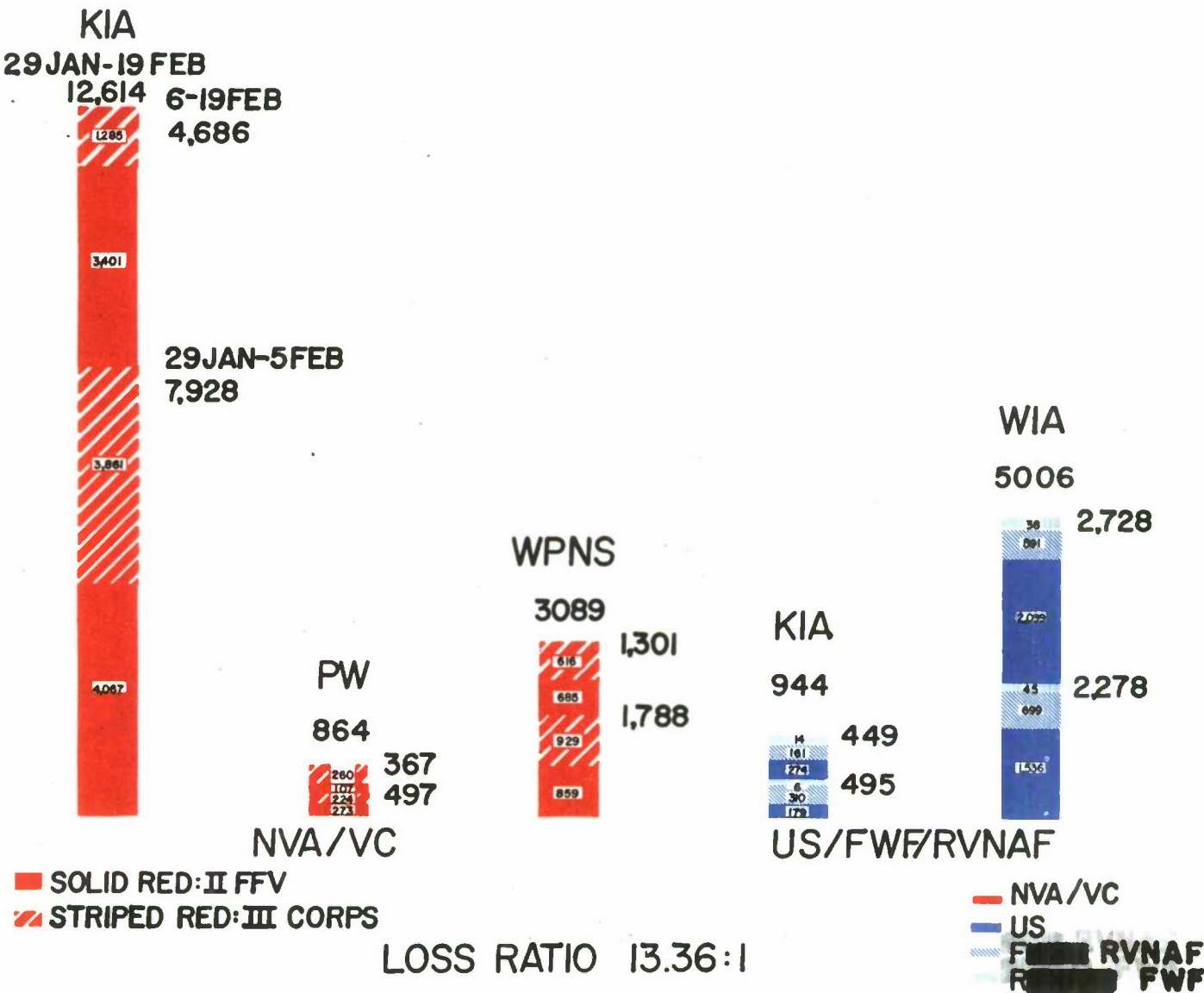
DOES NOT INCLUDE ARVN - 3 RF BNS, 2 MP BNS, 1 SECURITY
POLICE BN, 2 SVC BNS, 2 CAV TRPS

US - 2 CAV TRPS, 1 MP BN

BATTLE LOSSES III CTZ



BATTLE LOSSES III CTZ



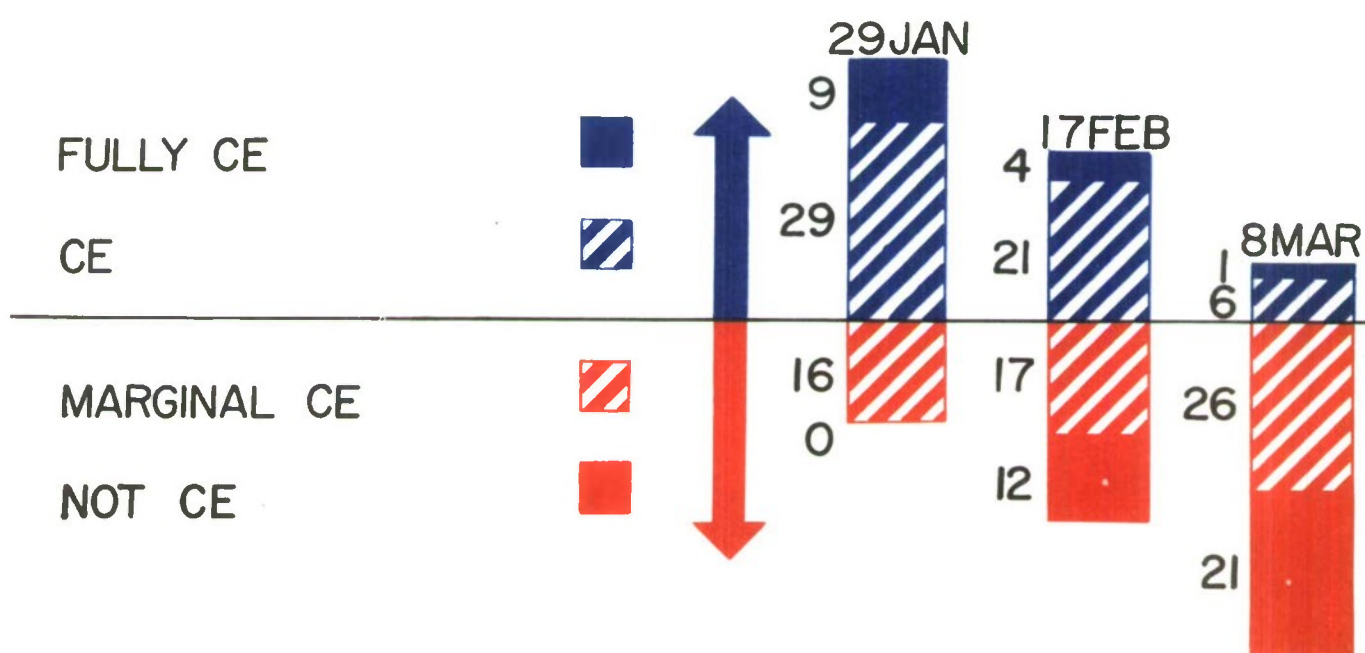
1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE CONTACTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NO OF CONTACTS WITH KILLS</u>	<u>VC BODY COUNT</u>
31 JAN	3	7
1 FEB	9	26
2 FEB	5	7
3 FEB	4	9
4 FEB	8	25
5 FEB	6	35
6 FEB	8	31
7 FEB	10	53
8 FEB	4	4
9 FEB	0	0
10 FEB	1	1
11-15 FEB	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
TOTAL	60	202

AVERAGE : 3.3 VC KILLED PER KILLING CONTACT

(HIGHEST SINGLE CONTACT WAS 18)

ESTIMATED COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS (CE)
OF IDENTIFIED
VC/NVA MANEUVER BNS* IN III CTZ
ON 29 JAN 1968



* (INF) BNS